

DYNAMIC OF ILLICIT DRUG TRADE AT THE GLOBAL AND LOCAL LEVELS

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Abstract

Our study aims to understand the dynamics of illicit drug trade at the global and national levels, highlighting international and national legislations combating this phenomenon. This will be done through the statistics provided in the World Drug Report for the year 2022 and the annual report of the National Anti-Drug and Addiction Agency for the year 2022.

The study concludes that the global market is witnessing a prevalence of cannabis trade more than other substances, while the domestic market sees a prevalence of psychoactive substances in terms of supply and demand, as well as cannabis trade similar to what is happening globally.

Keywords: Drugs; Psychoactive Substances; Illicit Trade.

I- Introduction:

Drugs and psychoactive substances constitute a crime that encompasses several offenses punishable by law, including production, smuggling, trafficking, possession, and consumption. All these illicit activities take place in the unofficial and illegal drug market.

The illicit drug market is characterized by the diversity of drugs, sources, as well as supply and demand. It has witnessed widespread dissemination of traditional plant-based drugs and their derivatives (such as cannabis, opioids, cocaine, heroin, etc.), along with the growing spread of new types of drugs, namely psychoactive substances, which are traded illegally and apart from their medical uses.

Globalization and economic openness have contributed to the growth and spread of drug trafficking and globalizing its risks. Algeria has not been immune to this phenomenon, as it has witnessed an escalating increase in both drug trafficking and consumption at the beginning of the 21st century.

Due to its connection to various crimes and the growing dangers resulting from drug trade and consumption, including homicides, robberies, kidnappings, and sexual assaults, Algerian authorities, like other countries around the world, have taken legislative and security measures to combat this serious phenomenon.

Given the wide prevalence of drug trade and its economic, social, and security repercussions, it has become necessary to study and monitor the illicit drug market at the global and national levels. This trade provides opportunities for the growth of national and transnational organized crime, threatening the security and stability of societies.

Based on the aforementioned, our study aims to understand the dynamics of illicit drug trade at the global and national levels, highlighting international and national legislations combating this phenomenon.

II– Conceptual Definition:

II.1. Concept of Drugs and Psychoactive Substances in the International Convention:

According to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, Article 1 states that a drug is any natural or synthetic substance listed in Schedules I and II.

The Convention specifies that "the terms 'Schedule I,' 'Schedule II,' 'Schedule III,' and 'Schedule IV' refer to the lists of drugs or preparations carrying these numbers, annexed to this Convention, as amended from time to time in accordance with the provisions of Article 3"¹.

The list of narcotic drugs and preparations subject to the provisions of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and its amended Protocol of 1971 is divided into four schedules:

- Schedule I includes the most dangerous substances to public health that possess addictive properties.
- Schedule II includes substances of lesser danger compared to those listed in Schedule I.
- Schedule III includes preparations with a lower potential for addiction compared to substances listed in Schedules I and II.
- Schedule IV includes narcotic drugs with a higher potential for addiction than their therapeutic benefits provide.

These substances are subject to all the control measures applicable to drugs listed in Schedule I.

As defined by the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, in its Article 1, a narcotic drug is any natural or synthetic substance listed in Schedule I and Schedule II of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961².

Regarding the Arab Agreement on Combating Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1994, a narcotic drug is defined in Article 1 as any natural or synthetic substance listed in Part I of the Unified Table. The

1- United Nations. (2014, 03). United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971. *International Drug Control Conventions*. New York: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

2- United Nations. (2014, 03). United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. International Drug Control Conventions. New York: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Unified Table refers to the Arab Unified Table on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which is derived from the United Nations Convention and its amendments³.

Psychotropic substances are defined according to Article 1 of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 as all substances, whether natural or synthetic, and all natural products listed in Schedule I, II, III, and IV⁴.

Due to the difficulty in finding a comprehensive universal definition of narcotics, substances with narcotic effects are classified and listed in specific schedules based on their degree of danger and narcotic effect.

The international agreements, the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, agreed to categorize narcotics into multiple schedules, and the signatory countries are bound by these schedules. They have the authority to transfer a substance from a less dangerous schedule to a more dangerous one and to include a substance in their schedules that is not listed in the conventions' schedules.

II. 2. Concept of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in Algerian Law:

According to Algerian legislation, in Law No. 23-05 dated May 7, 2023, amending and completing Law No. 01- 18 dated December 25, 2004, concerning the prevention of drugs and psychotropic substances, and the suppression of their illicit use and trafficking, Article 2 defines drugs as any natural or synthetic substance listed in Schedule I and Schedule II of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, as well as any substance classified nationally as a drug.

Psychotropic substances, as defined in Algerian legislation, include any natural or synthetic substance or any natural product listed in Schedule I, Schedule II, Schedule III, or Schedule IV of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, as well as any substance classified nationally as a psychotropic substance⁵.

II. 3. Concept of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in Algerian Law:

Laws in all countries have defined the conditions under which drug trafficking is considered legal and subject to specific regulations. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, contains provisions related to lawful drug trafficking. Article 30 of the convention addresses trade and distribution⁶.

On the other hand, illicit trafficking is closely associated with other organized criminal activities that pose a threat to the legitimate economy of countries, jeopardizing their stability, security, and sovereignty. Due to the profits generated by this illicit trade for organizations worldwide, which enable them to penetrate, corrupt, and undermine legitimate governments, commercial and financial institutions, as well as societies, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 has defined it. In Article 2, illicit trafficking refers to offenses stipulated in the first and second paragraphs of Article 3 of the convention.

Article 3 identifies the acts that should be criminalized through international legal provisions and the obligations of states regarding illicit trafficking. It stipulates that each party should take measures to criminalize the following acts within its domestic law if committed intentionally⁷:

- The production, manufacture, extraction, preparation, offering, sale, distribution, delivery, brokering, dispatch, transit, transportation, import, or export of any drugs or psychotropic substances in violation of the provisions of the 1961 Convention or the amended 1961 Convention or the 1971 Convention.
- The cultivation of opium poppy, coca bush, or cannabis plant for the purpose of producing drugs in violation of the provisions of the 1961 Convention or the amended 1961 Convention.
- The possession or purchase of any drugs or psychotropic substances for the purpose of engaging in any of the activities mentioned in the above paragraph.

3- Arab Agreement. (1994). Arab Agreement on Combating Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1994.

4- United Nations. (2014, 03), United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, Op.cit.

5- Algerian Law 23-05. (2023, 05 09). Algerian Law 23-05, dated May 7, 1923, amends and completes Law 01-18 dated December 25, 2004. relating to the prevention of drugs and psychotropic substances, and the suppression of their illicit use and trafficking. Official Gazette No. 32.

6- United Nations. (2014, 03), United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, Op.cit. 7- Ibid.

- The manufacturing, transportation, or distribution of equipment or substances, including those listed in Schedule I or Schedule II, knowing that they are used for or intended for the cultivation, production, or manufacturing of drugs or psychotropic substances in an unlawful manner.

- The organization, management, or financing of any of the crimes mentioned in the previous four paragraphs mentioned above.

As stated in the Arab Agreement to Combat Illicit Drug Trafficking and Psychotropic Substances, which entered into force on June 30, 1996, Article 2 criminalizes the following actions⁸:

- Production, manufacture, extraction, delivery, possession, acquisition, disposal, exchange, sale, brokering, dispatch, transit, transportation, import, or export of any drugs, psychotropic substances, or their components, with the intention of trafficking or engaging in any form of trade not authorized by law.
- Cultivation of plants that produce drugs or psychotropic substances, importing such plants at any stage of their growth, including seeds, exporting them, offering them for sale, selling them, distributing them, purchasing them, delivering them, possessing them, acquiring them, disposing of them, exchanging them, brokering them, dispatching them in transit, transporting them, importing them, or altering them with the intent of trafficking or engaging in any form of trade not authorized by law.
- Manufacturing, transportation, distribution, possession, offering, sale, purchase, delivery, acquisition, disposal, exchange, or brokering of equipment or substances listed in the unified schedule, knowing that they are used for or intended for the cultivation, production, or manufacturing of drugs or psychotropic substances in an unlawful manner. Organizing, managing, or financing any of the aforementioned crimes.
- Transferring or transporting money, knowing that it was obtained from any of the above-mentioned crimes or from participation in such crimes, with the intent to conceal or disguise the illicit source of the funds or to assist any person involved in committing such crimes to evade legal consequences.
- Concealing or disguising the nature of money, its source, location, method of disposal, movement, rights related to it, or ownership, knowing that it was obtained from the above-mentioned crimes or resulting from participation in such crimes.
- Acquiring, possessing, or using money, knowing at the time of receipt that it was obtained from the aforementioned crimes or resulting from participation in such crimes.
- Inciting others by any means to commit any of the crimes mentioned above or to use drugs or psychotropic substances unlawfully.
- Participating in or aiding and abetting the commission of the crimes mentioned above, or conspiring or attempting to commit them, or facilitating them, or providing advice on their commission.

III- The Reality of Illicit Drug Trade at the Global Level :

According to the United Nations report for the year 2022, the legalization of cannabis in parts of the world has led to an acceleration of daily use and related health effects, as stated in the World Drug Report 2022 issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Cocaine use and the spread of synthetic drugs into new markets, along with ongoing gaps in access to medical treatments, particularly for women, were also highlighted⁹.

Approximately 284 million people aged 15 to 64 worldwide used drugs in 2020, representing a 26% increase compared to the previous decade. Young people are consuming more drugs, with current levels of use in many countries surpassing those of the previous generation. In Africa and Latin America, individuals under the age of 35 constitute the majority of those seeking treatment for drug use disorders.

Globally, the report estimates that 11.2 million people worldwide use drugs through injection. Nearly half of this number are affected by hepatitis C, while 1.4 million are living with HIV, and 1.2 million are affected by both conditions.

III. 1. Early Indicators and Effects of Cannabis Legalization:

8- Arab Agreement. (1994), Op.cit.

9- United Nations, (2022). World Drug Report. Retrieved from UN: www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/world-drug-report-2022.html

The legalization of cannabis in North America has led to an increase in daily cannabis use, particularly potent cannabis products, especially among youth. Concurrent increases have been reported in mental health disorders, suicides, and treatment admissions. Legalization has also resulted in increased tax revenues and a general reduction in cannabis possession arrest rates.

III. 2. Continued Growth in Drug Production and Trafficking:

The cocaine industry reached a record high in 2020, growing by 11 percent from 2019 to reach 1,982 tons. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, cocaine seizures also increased to a record level of 1,424 tons in 2020. Approximately 90 percent of the globally seized cocaine in 2021 was trafficked via containers and/or maritime routes. Seizure data indicates that cocaine trafficking is expanding to include other regions beyond the primary markets of North America and Europe, with increased trafficking levels to Africa and Asia.

Methamphetamine trafficking continues to expand geographically, with 117 countries reporting seizures of methamphetamine in 2016-2020 compared to 84 countries in 2006-2010. Meanwhile, the seized quantities of methamphetamine increased five-fold between 2010 and 2020.

Global opium production grew by 7 percent between 2020 and 2021 to reach 7,930 tons, largely driven by increased production in Afghanistan. However, the global area under opium poppy cultivation decreased by 16 percent to 800,246 hectares in the same period.

III. 3. Drug Trends Divided by Region:

In many countries in Africa, South America, and Central America, the highest proportion of individuals receiving treatment for drug use disorders primarily suffer from cannabis use disorders. In Eastern and Southeastern Europe and Central Asia, people are often treated for opioid use disorders.

In the United States and Canada, overdose deaths, mainly driven by the non-medical use of fentanyl, continue to break records. Initial estimates in the United States indicate over 107,000 drug overdose deaths in 2021, an increase from approximately 92,000 deaths in 2020.

In the two largest methamphetamine markets, seizures have increased. In North America, they rose by 7% compared to the previous year, while in Southeast Asia, they increased by 30% compared to the previous year, reaching record levels in both regions. A record increase in methamphetamine seizures was also reported in Southwest Asia, where they increased by 50% in 2020 compared to 2019.

There is still a significant disparity in the availability of opioid pharmaceuticals for medical consumption. In 2020, there were an additional 7,500 doses per million population of controlled pain relievers in North America compared to West and Central Africa.

III. 4. Conflict Areas and Synthetic Drug Production:

The United Nations report for 2022 also highlights that illicit drug economies can thrive in conflict situations and where the rule of law is weak, thus prolonging or fueling the conflict. Information from the Middle East and Southeast Asia suggests that conflict areas can serve as magnets for the production of synthetic drugs, which can be manufactured anywhere. This effect may be greater when the conflict zone is close to major consumer markets.

Historically, drug parties have used drugs to fund conflicts and generate income. The World Drug Report for 2022 also reveals that conflicts can disrupt drug trafficking routes, as seen in the Balkans and recently in Ukraine.

There has been a significant increase in the reported number of clandestine laboratories in Ukraine, rising from 17 dismantled labs in 2019 to 79 in 2020. Of these labs, 67 were producing amphetamines, the largest number of dismantled labs reported in any specific country in 2020.

III. 5. Environmental Effects of Drug Markets:

According to the World Drug Report for 2022, illicit drug markets can have local,

community, or individual impacts on the environment. Key findings include indoor cannabis having a carbon footprint between 16 and 100 times higher than outdoor-grown cannabis on average, and the footprint of one kilogram of cocaine being 30 times higher than that of cocoa beans.

Other environmental effects include the deforestation associated with illicit coca cultivation, waste generated during the production of synthetic drugs, which can be 5 to 30 times the volume of the final product, direct pollution of soil, water, and air through waste disposal, as well as indirect impacts on wildlife, animals, and the food chain.

III. 6. Treatment for Addiction:

The UN report highlights a gender gap where women constitute a minority of drug users worldwide. However, they tend to have an increased rate of drug consumption and progress towards drug use disorders faster than men. Women now account for an estimated 45-49% of amphetamine users, non-medical users of pharmaceutical stimulants, pharmaceutical opioids, sedatives, and tranquilizers.

There is still a significant treatment gap for women globally. Although women make up nearly one in two amphetamine users, they represent only one in five people in amphetamine use disorder treatment.

The World Drug Report 2022 also sheds light on the wide range of roles women play in the global cocaine economy, including coca cultivation, transporting small drug quantities, selling to consumers, and smuggling into prisons.

IV- The reality of illicit drug trade in Algeria:

The number of drug users in Algeria is increasing alarmingly. The latest statistics indicate that over 300,000 Algerian youth are involved in drug use, with 90% of them being males between the ages of 13 and 35. According to some studies, drug use was primarily concentrated in urban areas, but recently it has spread to villages, rural areas, universities, and secondary schools. This has resulted in increased crime rates, violence, road accidents, and other negative consequences¹⁰.

The annual report of the National Office for Drug Control in 2022 provided data on the quantities of drugs and psychotropic substances seized during the years 2021-2022. These drugs were intended for both domestic and cross-border markets, as well as for personal consumption. The quantities seized were estimated as follows, based on the type of drug¹¹:

IV. 1. Regarding cannabis:

The reports indicate a decrease in the smuggling and trade of cannabis within Algeria between the years 2021, where the seized quantities amounted to 28,732.742 kg, while 23,386.802 kg were confiscated in 2022. Similarly, the cross-border smuggling and trade of cannabis also witnessed a decrease between 2021, with seized quantities of 37,810.888 kg, and 32,231.016 kg confiscated in

2022. There was also a decrease in the quantity of cannabis intended for possession and consumption, estimated at 96.607 kg in 2021 and decreased to 50.291 kg in 2022. The statistics also indicate a decrease in the quantity of seized cannabis plants, with the quantity estimated at 8.6657 kg in 2021, and it decreased to 5.22654 kg in 2022. Furthermore, the quantity of cannabis seeds intended for cultivation decreased, with 1.04316 kg seized in 2021 compared to 0.935713 kg seized in 2022. In contrast, the cultivation of cannabis plants witnessed a significant increase, with the seized quantity of cannabis plants reaching 429 plants in 2021 and rising to 2,485 plants in 2022. Based on the data, it appears that the illicit local market trends for cannabis in Algeria have shown a tendency to decrease between the years 2021 and 2022, except for the cultivation of cannabis plants, which experienced a significant increase.

IV. 2. Regarding cocaine:

The reports indicate a decrease in the quantity of seized cocaine for smuggling and domestic trade. The seized quantity amounted to 494,737.682 grams in 2021 and significantly decreased to 51,649.072 grams in 2022. The quantity of cocaine intended for smuggling and trade across borders also witnessed a decrease, with the seized quantity being 8,050.682 grams in 2021, while it decreased to 2,108.510 grams in 2022. Despite the trend towards a decrease in its presence in the local market, the percentage of possession and consumption of cocaine recorded a significant increase. The seized quantities in 2021 amounted to 70.502 grams and increased to 362.896 grams in 2022.

IV. 3. Regarding crack:

10- Hamish, A. (2022, 05 22). The Phenomenon Of Drug Proliferation In Society, Its Dangers, And How To Confront It. Retrieved from Elkhbar: <https://www.elkhabar.com/press/article/209462>

11- Ministry of Justice. (2022). National Office for Drug Control and Addiction. Retrieved from Anti-Drug and Addiction Activities Annual Report 2022: [https://onlcdt.mjustice.dz/onlcdt_ar/donnees_statistiques/bilan\[2022\].pdf](https://onlcdt.mjustice.dz/onlcdt_ar/donnees_statistiques/bilan[2022].pdf)

The reports indicate the seizure of 36.950 grams of crack cocaine in 2022 intended for smuggling and domestic trade. Additionally, a quantity of 4 grams was seized in 2021 intended for personal consumption. This indicates a low demand for this substance in the domestic market. As for opium, the reports indicate that the seized quantity intended for smuggling and domestic trade in seeds was 28.5 grams in 2021. Meanwhile, a quantity of 0.3 grams of seeds was seized for personal consumption in 2021. The seized quantity of seeds intended for cultivation was 761 in 2021, which decreased to 126.3 in 2022. Additionally, 83 opium plants intended for cultivation were seized in 2021, which increased to 191 plants in 2022, indicating an upward trend in opium cultivation in Algeria.

IV. 4. Regarding the substance heroin:

Reports indicate that its domestic trafficking and trade are experiencing a significant increase.

The seized quantity was estimated at 116.489 grams in 2021 and rose to 7857.987 grams in 2022. The quantities seized for smuggling and trafficking across borders in 2021 amounted to 1719.830 grams. The quantity intended for possession and consumption showed a substantial increase, with the seized amount being 19.663 grams in 2021 and rising to 92.910 grams in 2022. It is worth noting that, in contrast to the increase in its quantity in the domestic market, the consumption rate has also increased.

IV. 5. Regarding the market of psychotropic substances:

According to reports, the domestic market for these substances is witnessing a widespread popularity and a continuous increase over the years. The quantity of seized substances in 2021 amounted to 3,123,327 tablets and 29,545 capsules, intended for smuggling and domestic trade. This quantity nearly tripled in 2022, reaching 9,399,077 tablets. On the other hand, in the context of smuggling and trafficking across borders, the quantity of seized substances decreased. It was 1,357,812 tablets in 2021 and decreased to 847,688 in 2022.

As for the quantity held for consumption in tablet form, there was a decrease between 2021 and 2022. It was 556,333 and 132,939 tablets, respectively. However, the percentage of confiscated vials designated for consumption increased from 234 vials to 306 vials. Due to the ease of accessibility and lower price compared to the scarcity and high cost of Indian hemp, drug users show an increasing inclination towards these substances. In order to curb their illegal trade, the Ministry of Health has listed 15 medicinal drugs as psychotropic substances subject to pre- and post-security control, while tightening the conditions for prescribing these drugs to patients.

IV. 6. Care for addicts and their treatment:

Table 1. The number of treated addicts over the past five years

Year	Number of treated addicts	Male	Female
2021	21,638	19,072	2,566
2020	19,701	17,547	2,154
2019	23,416	20,662	2,754
2018	24,424	21,972	2,452
2017	22,444	20,024	2,420

Source: Report on the past four years' activities in drug control and addiction, annual statistics

Based on the data, we observe a decline in the demand for treatment among male addicts over the past five years, while there is an increasing trend in treatment among female addicts during this period.

V- Combating Drugs and Psychotropic Substances at the International and Local Levels:

V. 1. Under International Agreements:

On July 28, 1958, the United Nations Economic and Social Council decided to convene a Conference of Plenipotentiaries to adopt a single convention on drugs, replacing the existing multilateral treaties in this field with a single document. The United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs was held at the United Nations headquarters from January 24 to March 25, 1961, where the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs was adopted. The aim of the convention was to combat drug abuse through coordinated international intervention. The goal was to confine the possession, consumption, trafficking, distribution, import, export, manufacture, and production of drugs solely for medical and scientific purposes. It also aimed to combat drug trafficking through international cooperation to deter drug traffickers. It was amended by the 1972 Protocol Amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs.

The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, resulting from the United Nations Conference in Vienna in 1988, aimed to enhance cooperation among the parties to the convention so that they could effectively address the various dimensions of illicit drug and psychotropic substance trafficking at an international level. The convention covers, among various topics, crimes and penalties, jurisdiction, seizure and confiscation, extradition, mutual legal assistance, cooperation, and training. The convention also stipulates that parties shall take appropriate measures to prevent the diversion of substances used for illicit drug or psychotropic substance manufacturing, and they shall cooperate with each other to achieve this goal.

In addition to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, these treaties complement and reinforce each other. These three international treaties for drug control continue to be reference points in use today.

V. 2. Under Algerian legislation:

In the context of Algerian legislation, the text of Algerian Law 23-05 dated May 7, 1923, amends and complements Law 01-18 dated December 25, 2004, relating to the prevention of drugs and psychotropic substances and the suppression of their illegal use and trafficking, by criminalizing the possession, consumption, trafficking, and manufacture of drugs, and strengthening this criminalization with deterrent penalties, as follows:

Article 12 of the law stipulates a punishment of imprisonment for a period of two months to

two years and a fine ranging from 20,000 DZD to 50,000 DZD, or one of these two penalties, for anyone who consumes, buys, or possesses drugs or psychotropic substances for personal consumption in an unauthorized manner.

Article 16 provides for a punishment of imprisonment for a period of two to ten years and a fine ranging from 200,000 DZD to 1,000,000 DZD for the following actions:

- Intentionally preparing a written prescription containing drugs or psychotropic substances in violation of the specified regulations.
- Delivering drugs or psychotropic substances without a prescription or with a prescription that violates the specified regulations.
- Obtaining drugs or psychotropic substances for the purpose of selling or attempting to obtain them through medical prescriptions that violate the specified regulations.

Article 16 is also repeated, stating that, without prejudice to more severe penalties, imprisonment for a period of one to three years and a fine ranging from 100,000 DZD to 300,000 DZD shall be imposed on anyone who obtains or attempts to obtain drugs or psychotropic substances using threats, violence, or assault.

Furthermore, the repeated Article 16 states that imprisonment for a period of five to ten years and a fine ranging from 500,000 DZD to 1,000,000 DZD shall be imposed on anyone who deliberately traffics drugs and/or psychotropic substances by any means.

The penalty shall be imprisonment for a period of ten to twenty years and a fine ranging from 1,000,000 DZD to 2,000,000 DZD if the trafficking is carried out through or by individuals with special needs, or a person undergoing treatment due to addiction, or within educational, training, health, social, public bodies, or institutions open to the public.

Article 17 stipulates imprisonment for a period of ten to twenty years and a fine ranging from 5,000,000 DZD to 50,000,000 DZD for anyone who illegally produces, manufactures, sells, offers for sale, acquires, possesses, displays, purchases with the intent to sell or store, extracts, prepares, distributes, delivers, by any means, or brokers, ships, or transports drugs or psychotropic substances.

The temporary imprisonment of twenty to thirty years shall be imposed on the actions specified in the above paragraph, if committed by a public official whose position facilitates the commission of the crime, or by a healthcare professional, pharmacist, pharmaceutical industry employee, or by a user of an addiction treatment institution in an association active in the field of addiction prevention, or a member of the illegal use and trafficking of drugs and psychotropic substances.

Life imprisonment shall be imposed for anyone who illegally cultivates opium poppy, coca

bush, or cannabis plants with knowledge thereof. If the act specified in the first paragraph of this article is committed for personal consumption purposes, the offender shall be punished with imprisonment for a period of two to five years and a fine ranging from 200,000 DZD to 500,000 DZD.

VI- Conclusion:

The US State Department, in its annual report on the international drug control strategy, confirmed that most drugs crossing from Algeria consist of Indian cannabis coming from Morocco. It emphasized that despite the Algerian security forces primarily focusing on combating terrorism, officials have become increasingly concerned about the relationship between Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and drug traffickers.

On the other hand, the document noted that Algeria serves as a transit country, particularly for hashish, route to Europe, rather than being a significant drug consumption area. The majority of drugs passing through Algeria are composed of Indian cannabis from Morocco, as well as increasing amounts of South American cocaine.

Most of these drugs are transported by sea to Europe, while another portion is smuggled overland towards the Middle East. However, recent reports from the National Office for Drug Control in Algeria indicate a growing market for drugs and psychotropic substances internally, with increased supply and demand, particularly for psychotropic substances that are now being manufactured for medical purposes in Algeria. This facilitates their circulation due to lower prices and the prevailing belief in their reduced danger compared to other drugs.

Similar to what is happening in the international market, especially with the legalization of cannabis trade in some countries and the licensing of its use, as well as other substances that are not approved in certain nations, there are conflicts and terrorist movements that contribute to the drug trade to finance their political and military opposition.

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