I. Drugs, crime and violence: the microlevel impact

1. Crime related to drug abuse is mostly non-violent and often petty. Economic-compulsive crime to obtain drugs, such as theft and burglary, is more common than violent drug-induced assault. However, the impact of illicit drugs, crime and violence is highly damaging to local communities at the microsocial level, as members of those communities have to live in the midst of illicit drug markets, where crime and violence, and the threat of crime and violence, are ever present.

2. Crime and violence associated with drug abuse take on different forms at different levels in society. There are forms of crime and violence associated with international cartels, there is violent crime perpetrated by or against individual drug abusers and there are innocent individuals who are caught in the crossfire of violent drug cultures. The International Narcotics Control Board has chosen to review the impact of drugs, crime and violence at the microlevel in society, addressing the relationship between drug abuse, crime and violence with respect to individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities and taking into account both criminality and victimization. The Board intends to draw the attention of Governments to the relationship between drug abuse and trafficking at the microlevel and the development of violence and crime at the community level. The implementation by Governments of the provisions of the international drug control treaties dealing with drug abuse and trafficking contributes to a reduction in violence and crime, to the benefit of the prevailing social conditions in a country.

3. The macrolevel impact of drugs, crime and violence, in relation to organized crime, drug trafficking and transnational criminal networks, is different from, but closely related to, locally committed crime. The Board recognizes the importance of efforts to deal with the problems of macrolevel drug trafficking and transnational criminal networks, as well as criminal justice efforts, at the national and international levels, to combat those problems; however, the focus of the present chapter is on the equally important localized and targeted interventions with respect to groups engaging in or at risk of violent drug-related crime and on the affected communities.

A. Characteristics and possible explanations

4. A relationship between drug abuse and other criminal offences, including violent crime, can be found in various studies. Case studies of offenders who have committed violent crimes such as homicide and robbery indicate that drug abuse is often a critical factor. In turn, some evidence suggests that higher rates of violence are associated with more frequent drug abuse. At the same time, while some drug abusers engage in violent offending, other drug abusers are neither criminal nor violent. These findings have to be cautiously interpreted for what they do not say about other causes of violent crime that are unrelated to illicit drug abuse and for their selective interpretation of evidence that does not provide insight about abusers who are neither criminal nor violent. The violence that is present in some families and some communities is, undoubtedly, not simply a product of localized illicit drug abuse and trafficking. Violence linked to illicit drug trafficking may also reflect a deep-seated culture of violence in certain communities that has other origins, such as uneven distribution of income, civil unrest or war.

5. Given these caveats, there is abundant evidence about the relationship between serious delinquency, crime, violent crime and drug abuse and the negative consequences for both individuals and communities; for example:

(a) In the late 1990s, 69 per cent of arrestees in five police areas in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland tested positive for at least one illicit drug upon being arrested; and 61 per cent of those arrested for assault tested positive for an illicit drug;[1]

(b) In Brazil, drug-related violence is a particularly serious national challenge that has a negative impact on communities. Of almost 30,000 homicides registered annually, a high proportion are linked to drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. Street children play an important part in this illicit market, acting as couriers for drug traffickers, and are frequently killed because they

know too much, steal too much or are caught in the crossfire between gangs and dealers;

(c) In Latin America and the Caribbean, a survey conducted by the World Bank on youth gangs and violence indicated that youth gangs involved in drug trafficking generally displayed higher levels of violence than those not involved in such activity.[2]

6. The possible explanations of a relationship between drug abuse and crime given in the present chapter take into account the following key points:

(a) Drug abuse might promote criminality, and criminality might promote drug abuse;

(b) Drug abuse and criminality might be influenced by any number of third variables: biological; psychological; situational; and environmental;

(c) The way of policing illicit drug markets may have an impact on the criminality and violence associated with illicit drugs;

(d) Socio-economic factors, particularly as they impact on young people, contribute to the extent and nature of crime related to drug abuse.

7. The two core questions to consider are:

(a) What the extent and nature of crime and violent drug-related crime are at the microlevel in society;

(b) What the factors are that influence the slippage of individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities into violent drug-related crime.

B. Understanding drugs and crime

8. The Board has examined the main areas that shape the current way of thinking about drug abuse and antisocial behaviour, including violence, and has noted a number of factors that are offered, by different researchers in various disciplines, as causal explanations for a drugs/crime nexus. The main explanations for the relationship between substance abuse and aggression (or violence) can be characterized as follows:

(a) *Explanations focusing on the individual, such as biological and physiological explanations, psychopharmacological explanations and psychological and psychiatric explanations*. These disciplines

variously explore the impact of drug abuse on individuals according to their physical and mental characteristics and, to some extent, incorporate aspects of social context to explain drug abuse and aggression. For example, psychopharmacological studies marry the individual's psyche with substance abuse to explore how aggressive behaviour results from an interaction between drugs, personality and affective states of being;

(b) *Explanations focusing on social and cultural factors*. These disciplines include sociology, criminology, politics, economics, history, anthropology and cultural studies. The disciplines variously explore the relationship of social groups to drug abuse and crime as context-specific and use examples from real life. For example, socio-economic explanations examine income distribution, relative deprivation and social marginalization as they impact on different social groups; such explanations consider the individual and combined impact of each on drug abuse and related criminality.

9. Disciplines based on the individual interpret drug abuse primarily as the outward symbol of internal disorder. In comparison, disciplines offering explanations centred on sociological and culturally situated studies focus on social interaction, norms of conduct, sanctions and the setting of events as the main explanatory factors in the relationship between drugs and crime; these constitute the focus of the present chapter. Explanations of drug abuse, crime and violence are multifactorial; therefore, a range of disciplinary explanations can be utilized in an attempt to understand this relationship.

Explanations based on the individual

10. Studies that focus on the individual show that different illicit drugs have different impacts on the mind and body and affect individuals to varying degrees. In turn, the effects of illicit drugs differ according to the amounts consumed, the individual's body weight and history of drug abuse and the influence of genetic traits and personality predispositions on drug abuse. Controlled laboratory-based experiments on drug abuse and associated violence can only suggest a causal link between consumption of "drug A" and "violence B". In other words, it is very difficult, and misleading, to suggest a direct causal link between violence and illicit drug

ingestion without reference to culturally and socially situated factors that, in turn, influence an individual's behaviour.

11.   Focusing on one discipline in the vast literature on drug abuse and aggression, psychopharmacological studies have found that illicit and licit drugs, including alcohol, can be associated with aggression but that some have no such association. There is a wealth of evidence to support the assertion that alcohol consumption, under certain conditions, stimulates violence. In comparison, the ingestion of opiates, under certain conditions, has been found to inhibit aggression, but withdrawal from long-term abuse of these and related substances has been found to result in irritability and hostility. Frequency of cocaine abuse, and amphetamine abuse, has been associated with increased likelihood of involvement as a perpetrator in violent crime. Also, the use of barbiturates appears to be related to aggressive behaviour.

12.   While biologically and psychologically based explanations of the drugs/crime nexus provide a wealth of interesting insights, they do not account for subcultural and cross-cultural variations in actual experiences of drug abuse and its social consequences. The impact of illicit cocaine consumption and trafficking on affluent social groups, as opposed to poorer communities, cannot be accounted for in laboratory-controlled tests on drug abuse. In comparison, explanations focusing on social and cultural factors are grounded in "real-life" examples of communities that either experience or avoid problems associated with drug abuse, crime and violence.

Explanations focusing on social and cultural factors

13.   Evidence of socially and culturally situated influences on crime and violence covers three broad areas: (a) subcultural and cross-cultural studies of societies demonstrating conflicting evidence of aggression during substance abuse; (b) social-structural patterns of violence related to drug abuse according to variables such as gender, age, race/ethnicity and social class; and (c) aggression that is illustrative of sociocultural patterns, or conduct norms, that shape violent behaviour.

14.   The emergence and decline of crack cocaine markets in the United States of America, together with the associated rise and fall in the country's violent crime rate, from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, are often used to illustrate socially and culturally situated influences on crime and violence. Violence associated with crack cocaine has often been explained by the violent psychopharmological impact of the drug on the user and by the rise of gun-toting gangs.

15.   It has been argued that drugs and violence are related in three separate and distinct ways (the tripartite model): (a) psychopharmacological, suggesting that violence is the result of the acute effect of a psychoactive drug on the abuser; (b) economic-compulsive, suggesting that violence is committed instrumentally to generate money to purchase drugs; and (c) systemic, suggesting that violence is associated with the marketing of illicit drugs. Studies have generally revealed that psychopharmacological violence, including homicide, is most often associated with alcohol abuse. In comparison, economic-compulsive violence related to drugs is a rare event, but economic-compulsive crime to obtain drugs is frequent. Systemic violence is closely related to "turf" battles over illicit drug markets.

16.   Studies that build on the above tripartite model have suggested that reduction in drug-related violence is attributable to changing social norms or ways of behaving. In the case of New York, the city has been characterized as passing through distinct phases in its street drug markets in relation to the predominant use of different types of illicit drugs. Each era is associated with distinct birth cohorts exhibiting characteristic behavioural patterns associated with drug abuse.

17.   Historical evidence of birth cohort differences in drug abuse and resultant violent and non-violent behaviour reveals the influence of different drugs and illicit drug markets and different social norms on crime and violence. However, what data on this subject cannot clarify is whether conduct norms are causal factors in the decline in drug-related crime and violence or whether non-violent and non-criminal conduct norms are simply a consequence of declining levels of drug-related violence. In turn, conduct norms must be interpreted as context-specific and as differing between social groups at any one time. Moreover, the impact of drug-related crime and violence has to be interpreted beyond the immediate impact that it has on drug abusers and illicit drug trafficking, in order to take into consideration the insecurity experienced by

members of communities whose daily lives are affected by changing drug cultures.

18. Consideration also needs to be given to other relevant factors shaping the relationship between drugs and crime over time, such as the general state of the economy and, in particular, levels of unemployment. The impact of prevailing socio-economic conditions on drug-related crime, including violent crime, was the focus of the report of the Board for 2002.[3] In short, communities that suffer from high unemployment and social insecurity are prime sites for infiltration by drug gangs offering alternative sources of income. If the situation is left unchecked, such communities may collide with drug gangs and local traffickers, who employ violent tactics to secure their corner of the illicit drug market. However, not all communities with high unemployment and indicators of social deprivation will necessarily have high rates of crime and drug abuse. Social safeguards and alternative forms of income generation, resulting from efforts by Governments and non-governmental organizations, in tandem with the efforts of the local community, can stem the tide of crime and illicit drug markets. Conversely, high-income communities also have their share of drug abuse and crime; however, crime in those communities tends to appear in the form of fraud rather than interpersonal violence.

Impact of law enforcement on drugs, crime and violence at the microlevel

19. There is another factor that needs to be considered when attempting to understand the development of drug-related crime and violence at the microlevel in society: the level and nature of interventions by local law enforcement agencies. The role and activities of law enforcement agencies have consequences beyond the immediate setting of a particular drug scene, as it affects the surrounding community. In turn, police and criminal justice intervention needs to be understood as a reflection of government policy and the particular remit of political parties.

20. Essentially, law enforcement interventions are intended to interdict criminal behaviour and punish crime. The intention of efforts to remove perpetrators from their environment through imprisonment is to prevent further crime and violence and to use the threat of punishment to discourage first-time offending or repeat offending. Law enforcement interventions are

the most visible response to violence and drug abuse in most countries. However, law enforcement has to be accompanied by other measures in order to have the desired lasting impact. Imprisonment alone may contribute to increased violent behaviour instead of reducing it.

21. Crackdowns on illicit drug markets can have unforeseen consequences for those drug abusers (and persons not abusing drugs) who live in low-income neighbourhoods and for those who do not engage in offending activities. Sensitive community policing, based on informed knowledge of local drug abusers, micro-traffickers and the concerns of "innocent" members of the local community, can ensure that unsuccessful police crackdowns on local illicit drug markets are avoided. Targeted long-term police intervention, coupled with economic and social initiatives, can enhance the success of police efforts at the microlevel. Communities that have suitable levels of social support, offer alternative means of generating income and work in tandem with law enforcement are in a better position to avoid the pitfalls of police intervention that fails to work in partnership with other community agencies.

22. Understanding the impact of law enforcement is important in designing intervention strategies. Local illicit drug markets, where buyers and sellers know each other, do not lend themselves to territorial competition. In comparison, illicit drug markets where buyers and sellers often do not know each other lend themselves to increased territoriality and competition; hence, the potential for violence in public places such as parks and bus stations. The impact of illicit drug markets in public areas, where violent competition between sellers is rife, can only have negative consequences for local communities that have to use those public areas where drug transactions occur. As illicit drug markets mature, advancements in new technologies such as mobile (cellular) telephones, beepers and the Internet continue to be made and illegal drug transactions can increasingly be made away from public areas; as a consequence, the risk of members of the community being caught in transactions between rival drug gangs that end in violence may be reduced. However, the most vulnerable drug abusers, those from the lower socio-economic strata, such as many heroin addicts, are unlikely to have access to new technologies and will therefore remain vulnerable to violent crime.

23. When the policing of illicit drug markets is not accompanied by efforts to provide alternative sources of income, it is highly likely that such police intervention will be unsuccessful in the long run because the members of the community will continue to be reliant on the illicit drug trade for their income. The ultimate worst-case scenario is the abandonment of such communities by law enforcement authorities and, as a result, a violent power takeover by drug trafficking gangs.

C. Youth, gangs, drugs and violence

24. Successive longitudinal studies, accounting for variations according to age, sex and ethnicity, have indicated that, as young people move from adolescence to adulthood, the proximal predictors of violence fluctuate. As parental influence reduces with age and peer influence increases, the likelihood of young people, essentially young men, being associated with crime, violent crime and/or drug abuse will be enhanced when their situation is compounded by negative factors. While it is difficult to identify specific factors as influencing youth involvement in violent crime associated with drug offending, studies have highlighted the following as contributing towards youth involvement in violent crime and/or drug abuse:

(a) Environment: low socio-economic status and/or unemployment in neighbourhoods with high crime levels; high rates of victimization;

(b) Familial variables: early separation from parents; low attachment to parents; harsh parental attitude; inconsistent parenting; witness to familial violence;

(c) Attitudes and associations: delinquent peer associations; favourable attitude towards drug abuse or violence;

(d) Individual characteristics: minority group member; difficulties in school and/or school non-attendance;

(e) Conduct problems and psychopathology: high rate of reported criminal activity; early onset of drug abuse; drug dealing; conduct disorder; antisocial personality; perceived or observed emotional problems.

25. Given that much of drug-related crime and violence centres on young males in marginalized social

positions, the role of youth culture, in particular youth gangs, needs to be considered. A distinction should be drawn between different types of youth gangs and their relationship to illicit drug markets and violence. Variations also exist in drug abuse and the violence associated with it among different gangs. Most gang violence is endemic to youth gang culture, and drug abuse and drug trafficking associated with some gangs exacerbate a culture of violence normalization. Violence, such as intrafamilial violence, is also a part of gang members' lives, either as perpetrators or victims, outside the setting of the gang. The introduction of illicit drug consumption and competitive illicit drug markets can produce an explosive cocktail of violent crime that feeds on economic and civil insecurity in vulnerable communities. Violent drug cultures succeed in further destabilizing such communities. In more affluent communities, where various means exist to combat the negative impact of illicit drugs, the introduction of such drugs is less likely to result in community destabilization.

26. Another factor to consider is the availability and use of weapons, in particular guns, to "secure" market shares. There is evidence that illegal drug-selling has a significant impact on illegal gun-carrying. The increased presence of guns enhances the culture of violence among gangs, which inevitably has an impact on members of the local community, who have to live with the enhanced threat of violence.

27. When considering the characteristics and causes behind violent drug-related crime in youth, care must be taken not to lose sight of the following:

(a) First, a relatively small group of serious and violent juvenile offenders, who are also heavy drug abusers, account for a disproportionate amount of all serious crime committed by delinquents;

(b) Second, while offending and violent offending peak in adolescence and early adulthood, the majority of young people grow up and out of violent behaviour once they reach their twenties.

28. Likewise, while certain gangs retain membership into adulthood, the majority of adolescents leave the social enclave of gangs as they enter adulthood; however, the negative impact on communities of youth involvement in gang cultures, in particular, violent drug gangs, has an impact that continues beyond the point when individual members leave, as new members

are recruited and continue to inflict violence on their local communities.

D. Consequences and the way forward

Impact of drugs, crime and violence at the microlevel

29. Economic opportunities provided to criminal groups by illicit drug markets enhance the scope for crime and violence, as criminals compete for a share of those markets; that, in turn, may have dire consequences for the local community. Rivalries or "turf wars" between local drug dealers and traffickers can develop into violent confrontations in and around public places and, as a result, make such places "no-go areas" for the general public.

30. The deterioration of law and order in neighbourhoods where drug-related crime and violence hold sway means that the public's willingness to identify those involved, in an effort to stem the tide of violence, is held in check by a culture of fear and, in many cases, distrust of the police. Added to that is the fact that communities may become dependent on local illicit drug markets that support whole economies and, therefore, are both unable and unwilling to challenge the status quo, as doing so might jeopardize personal incomes. The authorities themselves may also be in no position to challenge violent drug-related crime in certain communities, as they too are at risk of violence or they have been influenced by corruption and are consequently in a state of inertia.

31. The stress, anxiety and fear generated by exposure to crime and violence, in turn, interfere with the daily lives and normal developmental progress of people, in particular, young people: for example, their ability to trust and have a sense of personal safety; their ability to develop skills to control their emotions; their freedom to explore the local environment; and their ability to form "normal" social relationships. Exposure to violence, particularly starting at a young age, is likely to result in the normalization of violent behaviour and, in some cases, the actual manifestation of violence. Studies have shown that young males aged 11-17 are at high risk of engaging in serious violence: (a) if they place importance on their families and spend time with their families but are nevertheless exposed to attitudes favourable to violence; (b) if they engage in

drug abuse; (c) if they live in disordered neighbourhoods; and (d) if they are frequently victimized and simultaneously committing minor acts of delinquency.

32. Since the early 1990s, the number of studies on intrafamilial violence and community-based violence and on their impact on children and youth has grown exponentially. However, researchers are only now beginning to conceptualize the field with regard to microlevel violence in relation to: (a) the neighbourhood and the community; (b) the family and the household; (c) relationships with parents and caregivers; (d) relationships with peers; and (e) personal characteristics. Understanding the interaction of these different areas and their influence on people's lives can help in seeking explanations for people's involvement in crime, violent crime and drug-related offending. The international community would do well to turn its attention to these areas in an effort to understand, combat and prevent the negative impact of illicit drugs and the related violent crime on both young people and adults in vulnerable communities.

33. It goes without saying that crime is a huge problem, one that goes beyond its immediate impact on levels of lawlessness. The social harm caused to communities, at the microlevel, by the involvement of both adults and young people in drug-related crime and violence is immense. The very fabric of society is challenged by the continued presence in communities of drug-related crime. Communities that suffer disproportionate levels of violent crime related to illicit drugs also experience heightened levels of other criminality and the disruptions to civil society associated with it.

34. Social capital, or the degree of community integration, is an important consideration when attempting to document and explain increases in community-level crime and violence. Social capital refers to the norms, or "laws", that exist in social relations, and through social institutions, that instil foundations for trust, obligation and reciprocity. The extent of social capital in a community, or the degree of social bonding according to established norms of behaviour, can help to explain levels of violence and crime. Communities that lack social capital are likely to suffer from more crime and violence. Absence or flight of social capital is exacerbated by increased levels of violence and crime that are related to the negative impact of illicit drug markets on communities.

In Jamaica, a cyclical relationship between violence and the destruction of social capital in five poor urban communities has been documented.[4] As a consequence of violence, employment and educational opportunities were reduced, businesses did not invest in the local area, local people were less likely to build new homes or make home improvements and freedom of movement was curtailed. In turn, those conditions, amounting to destruction of the local infrastructure and opportunities, increased the likelihood of violent behaviour, particularly among young people, as mistrust was enhanced and civil norms were challenged. The relationship between loss of social capital and increased violent crime, including violent drug-related crime, cannot be ignored.

35. In contrast to this example, Central Asia suffers from widespread drug trafficking, yet it has relatively low levels of violent drug-related crime. That may be due to strong family ties and the influence of strict social norms. However, evidence suggests that this picture might be changing, as regional insecurity, coupled with increasing levels of drug abuse, has had a negative impact on social stability and associated levels of crime. Likewise, the rise in the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants among young people in South-East Asia and increased consumption of illicit drugs in East Asia might, in turn, have a negative impact on crime, in particular violent crime, in those regions as norms of conduct are challenged.

Drugs, crime, violence and victimization

36. A number of studies have highlighted the role of drug abuse in relation to the risk and experience of victimization, as opposed to the risk of offending. That approach is the reverse of that of the majority of research, which focuses on substance abuse and propensity to offend. The overwhelming conclusion of the studies examining victimization is that drug abuse leads to heightened risk of victimization. Drug abusers, either as first-time or long-term abusers, are vulnerable to victimization because drugs can either temporarily or permanently, over a prolonged period of abuse, remove a person's ability to accurately interpret and respond to dangerous situations. Drug abusers are also exposed to situations where violence, in addition to the use of guns in connection with drug trafficking, is normalized.

37. Female drug abusers suffer disproportionately from sexual assault. Some studies have indicated that women who use illicit drugs are more likely to be victimized in their lifetime than women with alcohol abuse problems. Female drug abusers are particularly vulnerable to sexual assault while under the influence of drugs and while living in situations that expose them to increased risk of victimization. Prostitutes who abuse drugs are also a high-risk group. News reports of so-called "date rape" drugs being given to unsuspecting women are a reflection of a disturbing trend concerning drug abuse and violent victimization.

38. Schoolchildren who are illicit drug consumers and/or dealers also constitute a group that can be singled out as being at increased risk of violent victimization involving guns and other weapons such as knives. The problem of drugs and violent weapon-related crime in schools has come to light since the early or middle part of the 1990s. Violent drug-related crime has a negative effect on the day-to-day management of schools, breeding a culture of insecurity that undermines authority. It also leads to a negative association between school and violent crime and has a negative impact on students, teachers, families and the community as a whole.

39. While violent and non-violent drug-related crime has a disproportionate direct impact on certain individuals and segments of society, namely poor people and dysfunctional communities, its indirect impact, which is more wide-ranging, primarily emerges as fear of crime and reduced use of public places. Fear of crime impacts on people's daily lives more than crime itself. While, in the majority of societies, it is the unfortunate few who suffer the brunt of repeat victimization, whether in the form of domestic or other interpersonal violence, most people suffer from crime indirectly, because of their fear of victimization. Fear of crime, or rather fear of victimization, requires people to alter their use of public places—streets, parks, playgrounds, shopping areas—to avoid exposing themselves to the real or perceived risk of victimization. Although criminological evidence has indicated that young men are most at risk of violent victimization in public places, that does not change the fact that those at least risk of victimization, such as the elderly, alter their behaviour to avoid potential harm. In communities where violent drug-related crime is

rampant, young men might be most at risk of being victimized by other young men, but the freedom of movement of women, the elderly and young children is curtailed as a precautionary measure against victimization.

E. Responding to drugs, crime and violence at the microlevel: policy implications

40. Certainly young people are not the only source of drug-related crime and violence, but they often play a key role in manifestations of drug-related crime at the community level and, at the same time, they are also victims of drug-related crime. Therefore, there is a need to target young people in an effort to combat serious social problems at the level of the family, the neighbourhood and the community. The key goals should include:

(a) Deterrence of drug abuse: education, support and treatment programmes for young people, coupled with law enforcement initiatives and penal sanctions to deter drug abuse;

(b) Reduction of drug-related crime and violence: providing support to drug abusers and their families and to those communities most in danger of being destroyed by drugs.

41. In efforts to realize the above-mentioned key goals, emphasis must be placed on the need for criminal justice agencies, social welfare agencies and specialized non-governmental organizations to cooperate closely with one another. Sensitive law enforcement, through community policing initiatives, should be promoted rather than heavy-handed police crackdowns on drug abusers and communities where illicit drug markets thrive.

42. Local administrations have often been characterized as responding to problems related to drug-related crime and violence based on a process of denial, overreaction and misidentification. Firstly, local authorities deny that they have a problem on their hands; secondly, once the problem is recognized there tends to be an overreaction to it that can be counter-productive; and thirdly, there is a lack of accurate information, which can prevent the identification of, and appropriate responses to, the crime problem in question. This typified response to crime and violence

emphasizes the need to utilize targeted data on the phenomenon of local illicit drug markets, and the violence associated with that phenomenon, in order to avoid the pitfalls of uninformed intervention.

43. Interventions with offending young people and those at risk may include, for example:

(a) *System collaboration*: multi-agency partnerships are developed between agencies working with juveniles at risk and offending juveniles to ensure that the identified needs of juveniles are met in the course of case management, alternative sanctions and treatment;

(b) *Drug abuse prevention and treatment*: an affordable but comprehensive drug abuse prevention programme for the community and a treatment and rehabilitation programme for drug abusers.

44. Policing the problem can backfire if undertaken without the benefit of working partnerships with other agencies providing sensitive intervention in vulnerable communities. For example, recognition of drug addiction as a health problem, particularly for the most severely addicted persons, refocuses attention on individuals, and the community, in the hope that they can be reintegrated into society in a sensitive manner. One initiative, referred to in the 2002 *World Report on Violence and Health*,[5] published by the World Health Organization (WHO), involved the promotion of public health with a view to combating violence in Cali, Colombia, in the mid-1990s, which resulted in the homicide rate being significantly reduced.

45. Community-based initiatives have succeeded in suppressing the activities of youth gangs involved in violent crime and illicit drug trafficking. Unquestionably, the key to successfully organizing the community response to gangs is timely recognition of the emergence of gangs in order to confront the problem before it becomes a crisis and impacts on violent drug-related crime at the local level. Key areas for successful early intervention include:

(a) Early school-based intervention;

(b) Sensitively targeted police intervention focused on problem areas;

(c) Training programmes for school employees, criminal justice personnel, parents, community groups and youth service personnel;

(d) Accurate intelligence-gathering and regular information-sharing between agencies in an attempt to realize the nature and extent of the problem;

(e) Working together with the local media in an effort to report in a sensitive manner any drug and violent crime incidents, without sensationalizing events (as that might increase the chances of retribution or instil fear of crime).

46. While community-based intervention to prevent drug abuse is a "gold standard" to aim for, a number of interventions representing "good practice" involve individuals and communities that are already experiencing the consequences of drug abuse. These may include individual counselling, interpersonal skill training and family counselling. At the level of the community, involvement in activities after school— such as sport, music and computer clubs—is often promoted as a means to prevent both drug abuse and related criminality and to rehabilitate existing drug abusers. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is active in the promotion of measures aimed at keeping young people away from drug abuse and involved in other activities that do not pose a threat to their own well-being or that of their community.[6] The Economic and Social Council[7] and the General Assembly[8] have addressed crime prevention and juvenile justice by encouraging intervention at the microlevel in society.

47. Those responsible for adult- and youth-based community intervention against drug-related crime and violence need to be made aware of certain pitfalls. First and foremost, the budgets of different communities primarily determine what they can be reasonably expected to offer in an effort to deter and respond to drug abuse, crime and violence and whether such services can be offered in the long term. Secondly, lack of coordination between criminal justice agencies and community-based organizations does not bode well for the content, promotion and sustainability of such programmes. Thirdly, inactive "partnerships" between different agencies may result in a lack of awareness of programmes offered by other agencies, which can easily lead to duplication of effort.

48. In addition, when referring to "community" intervention, there is a need to give due consideration to identifying what is meant and understood by the term "community" among different groups, what is the geographical and political meaning of "community"

and who may speak for their community at meetings intended to address violence in the community. Communities should not be represented by schools, businesses, religious groups, public agencies or self-appointed "concerned citizens" without due consideration being given to the representation of those members of the community who tend to be associated with the anxiety caused by local crime, violence and illicit drug markets: the young people and drug abusers themselves.

49. One approach, called restorative justice, combines rehabilitation of offenders with concerns about victims' rights and community safety. Restorative justice seeks to resolve conflicts between victims, offenders and communities in settings that lend themselves to forms of dispute resolution other than imprisonment and, in so doing, it challenges established forms of justice. Restorative justice draws on traditional ideas of community-based justice in aboriginal societies and is being increasingly applied throughout the world in an effort to reintegrate offenders into their communities without causing harm to victims and other members of the community suffering from the consequences of crime, including violent drug-related crime. While restorative justice is primarily an intervention strategy for dealing with juvenile offenders, it may also be applied to adult offenders. It has been successfully employed for a range of offences in a number of countries, including Australia, Canada and New Zealand. Restorative justice is particularly promising as a tool for community intervention at the microlevel because it stresses the role of families and is able to take into account local cultural traditions and different contexts.[9]

50. Having other sources of income besides illicit drugs, in addition to having a stable society, is essential to efforts to combat illicit drug problems and the crime and violence associated with those problems. Rural and urban communities that rely on income generated by illicit drug markets will not be able to move beyond that situation if alternatives to those sources of income are not made available. If every person in society, from shopowners to government officials, is reliant on money generated by illicit drug trafficking, then concerted efforts are needed at the local, national and international levels to launch anti-corruption campaigns, raising public awareness of the problem, and to create alternative sources of income.

F. Conclusion: considerations for intervention

51.   Drug trafficking, and related crime and violence, links local communities with transnational criminal networks. The three main international drug control treaties do not differentiate between macrolevel and microlevel drug traffickers. While, at international meetings, Governments and international organizations often focus their efforts on preventing and combating transnational crime, less attention is paid to the type of crime and violence that has a direct effect on the population. Targeted intervention is needed to deal with local drug traffickers operating at the microlevel.

52.   Young people who engage in illicit drug consumption and drug trafficking at the local level are not only criminals but also the victims of their own activities. The personal cost of drug abuse and related criminal activity, including violent crime, has both short-term and long-term implications for the individual in terms of physical and mental health, as well as social and economic well-being. In turn, those activities cause damage that goes beyond the damage to those who abuse and sell illicit drugs, as families, neighbourhoods and entire communities suffer the consequences of cultures where crime and violence related to drug abuse become normalized and omnipresent. And where drug-related crime underpins the local economy, the chances of moving away from relying on illicit drug markets are reduced even further.

53.   How local law enforcement, in partnership with community organizations, responds to the problems of microlevel violent crime and drug abuse is critical to the development of cultures of violence. Community-based policing is essential to deterrence. Pre-emptive intervention, which alerts local criminal justice and social agencies to the emergence of a drug-related problem before it becomes fully fledged, is critical. To that end, interventions targeting communities and groups at greatest risk of becoming involved in drug abuse and trafficking and in violence associated with that activity can deter and prevent offending. The microlevel impact of violent drug cultures can be met head on with multi-agency partnerships that involve communities in the management of the threat posed by violent drug-related crime. The message from the local community needs to be:

(a)   It does not pay, in human terms, to allow the illegal drug economy to exist at the microlevel, that is, at the level of families, neighbourhoods and communities;

(b)   It pays for society to fight drug-related crime at the microlevel.

54.   When offering "good practice" examples of community-based intervention against drug-related crime, care needs to be taken to understand the particulars of different markets as context-specific. The interpretation of a drugs/crime nexus has to be broken down into component parts that together paint a more accurate picture of the nature and extent of the relationship between drugs, crime and violence. Knowledge of the characteristics, causes and consequences of drug-related crime, based on sound data, is important for the development of community-based intervention.

55.   Perhaps the most useful route to follow when suggesting practical ways to approach the relationship between drugs, crime and violence, particularly its impact at the microlevel in society, is to examine case studies in a range of disciplines that also offer suggestions for "best practice" intervention based on real success stories. The Board notes, for example, the positive impact of "drug treatment courts",[10] as specialist courts for drug offenders, that have been established in a small but growing number of countries where, inter alia, lower-level violent offenders can be taken care of using a multidisciplinary approach. The Board sees potential in these courts contributing more to dealing with the underlying individual, public safety, public health and community problems of drug-related crime and violence.[11]

56.   In addition, any intervention to combat the negative consequence of the drugs/crime nexus at the microlevel in society should also take into account the following experiences of socially advantaged communities alongside those of disadvantaged communities. People with high incomes and those benefiting from educational opportunities and other social advantages are also affected by drug abuse problems, though it can be argued that they are better equipped to deal with those challenges because they have the financial resources to do so. Privileged communities also live in the shadow of violent drug-related crime and suffer from the displacement effects of successful crackdowns on drug-related crime in neighbouring poor

communities. Fear of violent crime, induced by the rise in violent illicit drug markets, impacts on privileged people's use of public areas and results in an increase in security precautions, such as gated communities. The long-term impact of such precautionary measures can only enhance social inequalities, as the socially privileged attempt to remove themselves from dangers associated with violent drug-related crime that the poor must contend with. The trickle-down effect of target-hardening, whether it involves security measures for property or persons, is such that, in time, the less wealthy come to adopt the precautionary measures of the wealthy. That leaves the socially marginalized most vulnerable to drug-related crime and the violence often associated with it. In turn, further studies are needed on the impact of drug abuse on violence in prisons, prison being one community where cultures of violence and drug abuse are normalized. More insight is also needed on drug abuse, crime and violence in other institutional settings such as schools, children's homes and army training camps.

57. While some cultures (for example, those in which youth gangs thrive) are inherently criminal and violent long before the emergence of illicit drug markets, and other cultures move away from crime and violence associated with those markets to crime and violence associated with, for example, civil war, the fact remains that drug abuse and illicit drug markets enhance cultures of crime and violence. More timely and targeted efforts need to be made, at the local, national and international levels, through partnerships, including partnerships with a diverse range of organizations, to prevent drug abuse, crime and violent crime at the microlevel in society. At the same time, programmes aimed at introducing community-based microlevel interventions should be established to manage problems associated with offending and victimization, as they impact on individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities.

58. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is assisting Governments in finding appropriate programmes for intervention at the microlevel in society.

59. The Board stresses that interventions aimed at deterring and combating violent drug-related crime should generally include:

(a) *Socio-economic development*: focusing on local efforts at employment and licit income generation, and educational programmes targeting socially marginalized groups such as the poor, vulnerable youth and minorities at risk;

(b) *Urban regeneration*: focusing on socio-economic investment matched with local planning and design initiatives that set out to reduce crime and fear of crime by creating environments that are not conducive to drug dealing and micro-trafficking;

(c) *Multi-agency partnerships*: focusing on integrated intervention work with groups at risk, by local governments, criminal justice agencies, community organizations and youth organizations, in an effort to avoid duplication of effort;

(d) *Outreach work*: focusing on targeted intervention with those persons already abusing or selling illicit drugs and those at risk of doing so, through schools, health-care centres, sport centres and family and youth groups;

(e) *Community-based restorative justice intervention*: focusing on efforts, led by persons representing a cross-section of the community, to combat, deter and resolve, through restorative intervention, violent drug-related cultures of crime in local communities;

(f) *Intervention taking into account gender, youth and minority affiliation*: focusing on the circumstances and particular needs of different groups, as drug abusers and potential drug abusers, and encouraging mentoring, by appropriate adults, of individuals at risk;

(g) *Sustainable intervention*: focusing on the need for long-term intervention programmes that can secure and generate appropriate resources and employ local people in programme initiatives.

60. These elements, working together, should be applied alongside efforts at demand reduction, including treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers. Only with the introduction of a comprehensive demand reduction programme will real progress be made in addressing the multiple problems that illicit drugs inflict on communities.