

Measures To Combat Drugs Abuse Crime

تدابير مكافحة جريمة تعاطي المخدرات

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Abstract :

Drugs are a global concern, prompting the establishment of special frameworks by domestic and international systems to address and combat their significant impact on society and individuals. These frameworks encompass a diverse range of tools and mechanisms that intersect with legal institutions dedicated to healthcare, security, education, and preventive authorities. Algeria has recently focused its efforts on these aspects, influenced by regional and international endeavors. The country has stringent laws on organized crime, including drug-related offenses, and has adopted institutions with significant powers to regulate the pharmaceutical industry. Algeria aims to achieve a balance between protecting public health and the interests of companies, and has made progress in establishing an integrated system for regulating the pharmaceutical industry while allowing the participation of private Algerian or foreign companies. However, the country's pharmaceutical sector still relies heavily on imports.

Keywords ; Drug control - Drug trafficking - Punishment - Prevention - International system

ملخص:

تعتبر المخدرات مشكلة عالمية تثير قلق العديد من الدول والمنظمات الدولية، ومن فرط جسامة آثارها على حياة المجتمع والفرد على حد سواء، أصبحت كل الأنظمة الداخلية والدولية معنية بتأطير أنظمة خاصة للتصدي لها ومكافحتها. ومن بين أهم مميزات هذه الأنظمة أنها متنوعة الأدوات والآليات، فهي لا تقتصر على معالجة المشكل عقابيا فقط وإنما تتداخل معه كل المؤسسات القانونية المكرسة في المجال الصحي والأمني والتربوي وكذلك في نوعية الهيئات ذات الصلاحيات الردعية والوقائية، وكل ذلك اتجهت إليه الجزائر متأخرة خلال مسار زمني قصير وهي متأثرة بالجهود الإقليمية والدولية. إن الدراسة الحالية جاءت لتحليل التقنيات التي تحقق للمجتمع والأفراد أمنا قانونيا، وفي نفس الوقت تخلق لمتعاطي المخدرات سببا لمعاملته إنسانيا بدل عقابه.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مكافحة المخدرات- الاتجار بالمخدرات – المعاقبة – الوقاية- النظام الدولي

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Introduction:

The term 'drugs' refers to certain substances that impact the physical and psychological aspects of an individual, often leading to sedation. These substances can be used positively for medical purposes, such as in surgeries, or negatively in cases of abuse and trafficking, with serious consequences for the individual, their family, and their community.

One of the most challenging global problems is the issue of drugs, causing concern for societies, governments, and the international community due to its threat to various segments of society, including youth and children, as well as its economic impact on countries.

The expansion of illicit drug and psychoactive substance trafficking networks has contributed to an increase in the number of consumers. The phenomenon of addiction has experienced significant growth in Algeria in recent years, as it has become a transit area between drug-producing countries.

Recognizing the global concern about the widespread effects of drugs, cooperation between countries became necessary through the conclusion of several agreements. Various international bodies were established to oversee and implement these agreements. Each country is responsible for enhancing its efforts through its institutions and entities to combat and fight against this phenomenon. Combatting drug abuse starts with the family and school, playing a fundamental role in instilling principles and educating generations. The media and civil society also have crucial roles in raising awareness about the dangers of this scourge.

Algeria, like other countries, has witnessed a significant leap in its legal and legislative system concerning punitive policy. This was achieved through the issuance of Law No. 04/18 dated 25/12/2004, focusing on drug prevention, suppression of illegal drug use and trafficking. This law addressed the shortcomings of previous regulations, including Law No. 85-05 dated 16/02/1985, which concentrated on health protection and promotion. The new law includes provisions for penalties and the implementation of rehabilitative measures for drug users.

Considering these aspects, drug crimes are highly dangerous offenses at both national and international levels, with links to other forms of organized crime, such as terrorism, money laundering, and corruption. Algeria is no longer just a transit country; it has witnessed the cultivation of toxins like cannabis and opium in some regions.

Hence, it is crucial to identify the key legal mechanisms upon which the state and international communities rely to combat this type of crime. The research will be divided into two sections: the first titled "Combating Drug Abuse Crime in Algerian Legislation," and the second section will address "Combating Drug Abuse Crime at the International Level."

Section I : Combating Drug Abuse at the National Level

The Algerian legislature has enacted several laws to address the issue of drug abuse, notably the stringent provisions of Law No. 04-18 concerning the prevention of drug abuse, control of illegal use, and trafficking of drugs. It is important to note that during the period after independence until 1975 ⁽¹⁾, there was no legislation regulating drug control. Even the Penal Code issued in 1966⁽²⁾ did not address drug-related crimes and their penalties. The French legislation, which was enacted during the French occupation on September 24, 1956, remained in effect until a wake-up call was received.⁽³⁾ Therefore, one of the methods to combat this crime is the enactment of penal

provisions by the Algerian legislature and the establishment of specialized bodies to enforce these penalties, which will be discussed in this section.⁽⁴⁾

A- Penal Legislation

The sentence can be defined as "a criminal penalty determined by the law and imposed by the judiciary on the offender".⁽⁵⁾ Through this definition, we can observe that the Algerian legislature has enacted various repressive laws related to the crime of drug trafficking.

1- Penal Legislation Before Law No. 04/18

The Algerian legislature has enacted several penal provisions specifically addressing drug offenses, which can be categorized as follows:

a- Order No. 75-09, which focuses the suppression of illicit trafficking and consumption of toxic substances and drug

This order was issued in response to the exposure of an international drug smuggling ring in late 1974. Order No. 75-09 was issued on February 17, 1975, with the aim of intensifying punishment for smugglers, including the death penalty in cases where a drug-related crime poses a threat to the moral health of the Algerian people, as stated in Article 8 of the aforementioned order.

b- Order No. 76-79 concerning Public Health Law

The Algerian legislature included the subject of drugs under the title of toxic substances in this order, attempting to rectify all the shortcomings mentioned in the previous one. It also included combating drug misuse and treatment methods as an alternative to the specified punishment for the crime.

C-Decree No. 76-140 concerning toxic substances

This decree was issued with the purpose of identifying what is considered a drug and categorizing these toxic substances in three tables:

1. Table (A) for toxic substances;
2. Table (B) for narcotic substances;
3. Table (C) for hazardous substances.

d- Law No. 85-05 concerning Health Protection and Promotion

This law was enacted with the aim of addressing all the loopholes observed in previous legislations and reducing the spread of the drug phenomenon. The Law on Health Protection and Promotion has become the implemented framework for combating drug-related crimes.⁽⁶⁾

Additionally, we find Article 190 of the same law, which states that the production, transportation, importation, exportation, possession, offering, transfer, purchase, and use of toxic or narcotic substances and the cultivation of said plants are fixed by regulation. Furthermore, Article 245 states that anyone who unlawfully uses any of the substances or plants classified as narcotics shall be punished with imprisonment for a period of two months to one year, along with a fine ranging from 500 Algerian dinars to 5,000 Algerian dinars, or one of these two penalties.

Furthermore, Article 16 of the same law states that: "Anyone who intentionally provides a forged medical prescription containing psychotropic substances or does so through abuse of privilege, or distributes psychotropic substances without a prescription, or is aware of the falsified nature or abuse of privilege in medical prescriptions, shall be sentenced to imprisonment for a period ranging from 5 to 15 years, and a fine ranging from 500,000 Algerian dinars to 1,000,000 Algerian dinars."

Article 12 also states that "Anyone who illegally consumes or possesses drugs and psychotropic substances for personal use shall be sentenced to imprisonment for a period ranging from two months to two years, along with a fine ranging from 5,000 Algerian dinars to 50,000 Algerian dinars, or with one of these two penalties."

Based on the information provided, we can see that the legislature has imposed penalties for the act of drug consumption, whether an individual uses drugs themselves or provides them to

others with the intention of consumption. For example, this includes a pharmacist who dispenses a sedative medication to anyone without a prescription, knowing the nature of such substances.

2- Law No. 04-18 concerning the prevention of drugs and psychotropic substances, and the suppression of their illegal use and trafficking

The Algerian legislature enacted this law on December 25, 2004. This law repealed all previous legislations and subjected drugs listed in four tables to its provisions based on their "level of harm."

This law comprised 39 articles under the following titles:

1. Chapter One: General Provisions;
2. Chapter Two: Preventive and therapeutic measures;
3. Chapter Three: Criminal Provisions;
4. Chapter Four: Procedural Rules.

As for the penalties established, the Algerian legislature addressed several punitive provisions through this law, aiming to establish a punitive policy that seeks to strike a balance between the criminal interests under protection. The legislature adopted a progressive approach in penalties, increasing them for serious crimes such as drug trafficking, export and import of narcotics, and cultivation. However, the penalties were mitigated for offenders involved in drug consumption. Given the specificity of these crimes, the legislature introduced a set of provisions that assist the judge in determining the appropriate penalty by considering aggravating factors, mitigating circumstances, penalty reduction, and exemption, in addition to the relevant procedural measures.

Regarding the offense of drug and psychotropic substance consumption, the legislature has established primary penalties for it, as stated in Article 12 of Law 04-18.⁽⁷⁾ These penalties include imprisonment for a period ranging from two months to two years for anyone who consumes or possesses drugs for personal use. In comparison, under Law 85-05, specifically in Article 245 of the Health Law, the penalty was imprisonment for a period ranging from two months to one year, along with a fine ranging from 500 Algerian dinars to 5,000 Algerian dinars, or one of these two penalties. By comparing the two articles, we can observe that the legislature increased the maximum penalty from one year to two years and also raised the amount of the fine. Additionally, Law 04-18 includes complementary penalties, which can be either discretionary, as stated in Article 629, or mandatory, as stated in Articles 32 to 34. It also includes complementary penalties specific to foreigners, as stated in Article 24.

a-Discretionary complementary penalties

It should be noted that the penalties mentioned in Article 29 of Law 04-18 allow the judge, in the case of conviction for offenses specified in the same law, especially the crime of drug consumption and possession for personal use, to impose one of the complementary discretionary penalties. It states that "in the event of conviction for violating the provisions of this law, the appropriate judicial authority may impose a penalty of deprivation of political, civil, and family rights for a period of five to ten years, and may additionally impose the following sanctions:

1. The prohibition from practicing the profession associated with the felony for a period of not less than 5 years;
2. The prohibition of residence in accordance with the provisions stipulated in the Penal Code;
3. The revocation of the passport and the driving license for a period of not less than 5 years;
4. The prohibition from possessing or carrying a licensed firearm for a period of not less than 5 years;
5. Seizure of the items used or intended for the perpetration of the crime, or the items resulting from it;
6. The closure for a period not exceeding 10 years applies to hotels, furnished houses, dormitories, bars, restaurants, clubs, public venues, or any place open to the public or used by the public, where the operator has committed or participated in the perpetration of the

crimes specified in Articles 15 and 16 of this law.” This is in accordance with the provisions of Article 9, repeated 1,⁽⁸⁾ of the Penal Code, which explicitly defines the political, civil, and familial rights subject to deprivation.

It should be noted that the deprivation of these rights takes effect upon the completion of the primary sentence or the release of the convicted individual. The complementary penalties, as well as the primary penalty, are not subject to pardon or statute of limitations. Furthermore, the primary penalty can only be annulled through the process of rehabilitation procedures.⁽⁹⁾

Paragraph 2 of Article 246 of Law No. 85-05 includes complementary penalties which consist of 1) the possibility of prohibiting the practice of the profession in which the misdemeanor was committed for a maximum period of 5 years, 2) the possibility of imposing a ban on residency as per the conditions specified in Article 12 of the Penal Code, 3) the mandatory confiscation of the passport and suspension of the driver’s license for a maximum period of 3 years, 4) the obligation to seize the confiscated substances or plants, and 5) the obligation to seize the furniture, facilities, installations, and other means used in the production and transportation of the substances or plants, taking into account the rights of others.

And by reading this article, we notice that it combines both mandatory and optional complementary penalties in the same article. Additionally, Article 29 of Law No. 04-18 is more comprehensive than Article 246 of Law No. 85-05, as the latter did not include the penalty of prohibiting the possession or carrying of a licensed firearm for a period of not less than 5 years, or the penalty of closure of premises intended for committing these crimes.

b- Mandatory complementary penalties

Law No. 04-18 stipulated three mandatory complementary penalties in Articles 32 to 34. Article 32 states the confiscation of plants and substances that have not been destroyed or handed over to a qualified authority for legitimate use. This applies to all crimes specified in this law, and confiscation is mandatory as a preventive measure, as the possession of these drugs and psychotropic substances is considered a crime in itself.⁽¹⁰⁾

According to Executive Decree No. 07-230,⁽¹¹⁾ the procedures for handling these seized plants and substances are regulated. It is necessary to prepare an inventory report specifying their nature, weight, type, and all relevant medical descriptions, along with the place and date of seizure. The analysis conducted should also be mentioned, as stated in Article 2 of the same decree. Samples are taken or extracted to determine the seized substances, as mentioned in Article 3 of the decree. Subsequently, they are immediately destroyed in accordance with Article 04. However, drugs that can be used for medical purposes are handed over to authorized pharmacies and specialized institutions that use them, and a report is prepared accordingly (Article 4/2).

The disposal phase is carried out by a judgment or decision issued by the competent judicial authority through a committee chaired by the public prosecutor, and the record of the disposal is signed by all those present for the disposal process.

Also, Article 33 of Law No. 04-18 stipulates the confiscation of installations, equipment, and movable properties that are used or intended for use in the commission of a crime, regardless of their ownership, unless their owners can prove to have good intentions. And the items that can be confiscated include the equipment used in drug processing and packaging, as well as means of transportation such as cars, and properties such as land used for cultivation.

The same Law No. 04-18 also includes Article 34, which states, “The confiscation of money used in the commission of crimes specified by this law is carried out without prejudice to the legitimate interests of others in good faith. This applies equally to Algerian currency or foreign currency.”

c-The complementary penalties specific to foreigners:

Article 24 of Law No. 04-18 stipulates that in the case of foreigners convicted of committing one of the crimes specified in this law, they shall be prohibited from residing in Algerian territory permanently or for a period of not less than 10 years. The judge must pronounce this prohibition

explicitly and specify its duration. Similarly, Article 13, paragraph 5 of the Penal Code regarding foreigners states: "... a foreign person who violates the prohibition of residence in national territory imposed on them shall be punished with imprisonment for a period ranging from three months to three years and a fine ranging from 25,000 Algerian dinars to 300,000 Algerian dinars."

This penalty also applies to the accomplice in the crime or in any preparatory act specified in the law concerning drugs and psychotropic substances, in accordance with Article 23 of the same law.

d- The implementation of Penalties

Law No. 04-18 has established a set of rules that assist the judge in determining the penalty, including mitigating circumstances, the possibility of rehabilitation, and exemption from punishment.

- **Mitigating circumstances:** Article 26 of Law No. 04-18 establishes specific conditions that prevent the accused from benefiting from the mitigating circumstances outlined in Article 53 of the Penal Code.⁽¹²⁾ This is due to the nature of the offenders, who are either public officials, healthcare professionals, or individuals involved in drug control, as these categories are expected to demonstrate integrity. Additionally, Article 26 states the following: "The provisions of Article 53 of the Penal Code do not apply to crimes specified in Articles 12 to 23 of this law

- In cases where the perpetrator uses violence or weapons;
- When the perpetrator is a public official who commits a crime during the course of their official duties;
- If the crime is committed by a healthcare professional or an individual entrusted with drug enforcement responsibilities;
- If the administered drugs or psychotropic substances result in the death or serious injury of one or more individuals;
- If the perpetrator adds substances to the drugs that increase their danger."

Therefore, the judge determines the punishment within the maximum and minimum limits and is not allowed to go below the latter. Article 28 specifies the minimum limit of the penalty, which cannot be reduced when applying the mitigating circumstances.

- **Recidivism:** It is applied under the Penal Code to a repeat offender, resulting in a life sentence when the crime is punishable by 10 to 20 years of imprisonment, and temporary imprisonment ranging from 10 to 20 years when the crime is punishable by 5 to 10 years of imprisonment. The prescribed penalties for all other crimes are doubled according to Article 27 of Law No. 04-18.

- **Sentence reduction:** According to Article 31 of the same law,⁽¹³⁾ the judge may reduce the imposed sentence by half if, after initiating the public prosecution, the original perpetrator or accomplices in the same crime or similar crimes are apprehended. An example of this is a defendant who consumes drugs and is prosecuted but provides information about a drug dealer from whom they purchase or a person who provides them with a place to use the drugs.

- **Exemption from punishment:** According to the text of Article 30 of the aforementioned law, it states that anyone who reports to the administrative or judicial authorities any crime specified in this law before its implementation or attempted execution is exempted from punishment.

B- Specialized Authorities

The Algerian legislature did not rely solely on criminalizing drug use or trafficking in legal provisions to combat this crime. Rather, several internal bodies have been dedicated to its suppression. This is what we will discuss in these two subsections:

1- The Role of Civil Society and the National Gendarmerie in Combating this Crime

First, we will discuss the role of civil society, and then we will move on to the role of the National Gendarmerie.

a- The Role of Civil Society

In Algeria, there are several social and cultural associations through which informative and awareness campaigns can be organized targeting teenagers and young people, aimed at combating this phenomenon. These campaigns can focus on engaging in beneficial hobbies and participating in sports activities.⁽¹⁴⁾

b- The Role of the National Gendarmerie

The National Gendarmerie is one of the security agencies in Algeria that plays a crucial role in combating drug abuse, particularly drug trafficking. It carries out a specialized program in the area of drug control and provides suggestions in this regard.

- The National Gendarmerie's program in combating drug abuse

- . Establishing protection units at the level of the states of the country, similar to those existing in Algiers, Annaba, and Oran, which have a preventive role, and intensifying surveillance along the border, especially the Moroccan border.
- . Increasing surveillance on road networks to limit the movement of drugs.
- . Training National Gendarmerie personnel in the field of investigation.
- . Disbanding organized criminal networks involved in this type of criminal activity.

- Proposals of the National Gendarmerie regarding drug-related crimes

- . Imposing the maximum sentence in the case of juveniles being involved.
- . Increasing the penalty for anyone attempting to promote or traffic drugs.
- . Separating specialized treatment centers for drug addiction from hospitals related to mental illnesses.

2- The Role of the National Office for Drug Control and Specialized Centers in Algeria

In this part, we will first discuss the role of the National Office for Drug Control in Algeria, and secondly, the role of specialized addiction treatment centers.

a- The role of the National Office for Drug Control in Algeria

The Algerian legislator has sought to establish institutions whose role is to formulate the national drug control policy and develop a plan to take care of addicts in coordination with all relevant entities in this field. The National Office for Drug Control was established through Executive Decree No. 97-212,⁽¹⁵⁾ as amended by Executive Decree No. 03-133,⁽¹⁶⁾ with the aim of employing all means necessary to curb this phenomenon.

As for the tasks entrusted to this institution, it is responsible for formulating a national drug control policy and developing strategies to implement this policy, aimed at eliminating this scourge. The pillars of this strategy are based on three main components: suppression, treatment, and prevention.

b- The role of specialized addiction treatment centers

There is a range of institutions responsible for the treatment of drug and psychotropic substance addicts, and this variety undoubtedly helps reach a large number of addicts and guide them toward treatment. Therefore, we will discuss the different types of specialized treatment centers:

- **Mobile Centers:** These centers are established to receive individuals and provide them with information, guidance, and medical examinations, as well as psychological and social support. They also provide mobile monitoring and support during the rehabilitation process, including accompanying individuals to inpatient facilities.
- **Specialized centers equipped with social housing facilities:** These are communal living spaces that accommodate individuals for a limited period during rehabilitation and substitution treatment. They also facilitate social and vocational reintegration for residents.⁽¹⁷⁾

- **Residential Treatment Centers:** Also known as rehab, they are facilities where the addict stays for the entire duration of the treatment. These centers may be private clinics that charge fees, government-funded centers, or operate on a nominal fee basis. Their main objective is to detoxify or cleanse the body of toxins under the supervision of specialized doctors.

Section II : Combating drug abuse at the international level

Aside from the measures taken to combat drug trafficking at the national level, there are also international efforts manifested in the form of international agreements, committees, and specialized agencies to address this issue. This will be discussed in the first subsection titled "International Agreements on Drug Control," while the second subsection focuses on "International Agencies Specialized in Drug Control".

A- International Agreements on Drug Control

International agreements are considered the most important means of combating drug-related crimes at both the international and Arab levels.

1- At the International Level.

In this part, we will discuss a set of international agreements, including the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and its amended protocol, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and finally, the 1988 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

a- the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs

This convention was signed on December 13, 1961, at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York and became effective on December 13, 1964. Its objective was to consolidate all the agreements and protocols that were concluded before 1961.

Additionally, this convention restricts the use of narcotic drugs solely for legitimate medical and scientific purposes.⁽¹⁸⁾

b- The 1972 Protocol, which amends the 1961 Convention

The implementation of the aforementioned convention has led to the emergence of certain loopholes. It was adopted as an amendment to the convention on March 25, 1972, at the European headquarters of the United Nations.⁽¹⁹⁾

c- The Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971.

It is a convention established to impose control over psychotropic substances that are chemically classified and not covered by the 1961 Convention. It was adopted on February 21, 1971, in Vienna.⁽²⁰⁾

d- The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

Due to the widespread and pervasive nature of drug abuse and its association with other crimes such as terrorism, arms trafficking, and others, the international community deemed it necessary to establish comprehensive and effective agreements. One of these agreements is the United Nations Convention, which was adopted on December 19, 1988, in Vienna.⁽²¹⁾

2- On the Arab Level.

Since its establishment, the Arab League has been making efforts to find ways and means to combat the spread of drug crimes in the Arab world. In order to address this issue, it has issued the following:

a- The Unified Arab Model Law on Drugs

Its aim is to integrate member countries in formulating their local legislation related to combating drug crimes and psychotropic substances, in order to achieve the unification of multiple laws and integrate them into a single legislation applicable in the Arab region. It was issued by the Arab Interior Ministers' Council during its fourth session in Casablanca, Morocco, between 4th and 5th February 1986.⁽²²⁾

b- The Comprehensive Arab Strategy to Address the Phenomenon of Drug Abuse in the Arab World

This strategy is based on several pillars, including the religious, health, social, economic, legal, media, agricultural production, educational, and cultural pillars. It was approved by the Arab Interior Ministers' Council and was dedicated to combating drug abuse at various levels during the fifth session in Tunis in 1987. ⁽²³⁾ This strategy aims to adopt joint cooperation at the local, regional, bilateral, and international levels.

c- Arab Agreements to Combat Illicit Trafficking of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances

This agreement was adopted by the Arab Interior Ministers' Council during its eleventh session under Resolution No. 215 on January 5, 1994, in Tunis. ⁽²⁴⁾

This agreement aims to effectively combat the illicit trafficking of drugs and psychotropic substances. It also addresses aspects that were not covered by existing treaties in the field of drug control.

B- International Agencies Specialized in Drug Control

The means of combating drug abuse vary and are defined, and at the international level, the role of various international organizations in this field is highly vital.

1-The role of the United Nations Office and some international organizations in the field of drug control

a- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

It is an office affiliated with the United Nations and was established in 1997. Its objective is to control the spread of drugs and reduce crime by combining the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and the Drug and Crime Division of the United Nations Office in Vienna. One of its main tasks is the publication of the World Drug Report, an annual report that provides a comprehensive assessment of global drug issues. This report is prepared based on data and estimates provided by governments. ⁽²⁵⁾

b- The World Health Organization (WHO)

The World Health Organization (WHO), established on April 7, 1948, aims to address global health issues, coordinate health research programs, and provide technical support to member countries. Its primary objectives include supporting development, strengthening health security, and fostering effective partnerships with various stakeholders to implement health programs.

c- UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was established in 1945 after the end of World War II. It operates through more than 50 field offices worldwide and focuses primarily on the development of education within and outside of schools. It pays particular attention to issues related to drug abuse and promotes global research in this field, as well as the publication of research findings. ⁽²⁶⁾

d- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

This organization was founded on October 16, 1945, and its constitution was ratified at the United Nations Conference held in Canada. It is a specialized agency affiliated with the United Nations, aiming to improve nutrition and living standards. It collaborates with the organization in promoting beneficial crops over illicit drug-related crops such as cannabis, poppy, and coca. This initiative is part of the projects funded and overseen by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

1- The Role of Interpol and the World Customs Organization (WCO)

Both Interpol and the World Customs Organization play a crucial role in combating drug-related crimes.

a- Interpol

The International Criminal Police Organization, commonly known as Interpol, is an intergovernmental organization established in 1923. It has a specialized division and its main role is to identify new trends in drug trafficking. Interpol provides various forms of support to national and international law enforcement agencies involved in combating all forms of drug production and trafficking.

b- The World Customs Organization (WCO)

It is an international governmental organization based in the Belgian capital Brussels. Its role involves coordinating customs agencies and facilitating the exchange of information between them in order to take appropriate measures to combat various forms of smuggling, including drug trafficking and other types of illicit substances. The Council holds regional conferences every two years and publishes periodic bulletins that cover the latest developments in the world of illicit drug trafficking.⁽²⁷⁾

Conclusion:

From the above, it can be concluded that the problem of drugs, in terms of their use and distribution, has witnessed tremendous growth and widespread prevalence among individuals. This has made it a significant threat and a concern that troubles all modern human societies, jeopardizing their security and stability, especially when individuals go from being drug users to dealers. It is worth mentioning that the process of prevention, treatment, and combating drug abuse is not limited to a specific social institution but takes place at various national and international levels. The first level is the individual himself or herself, who needs to correct their thoughts and attitudes towards drugs, quit using them, and abide by societal norms and laws. At the family level, it is achieved through parents understanding the needs of their children and monitoring their behaviors.

At the security and judicial level, it is necessary to strengthen penalties for those involved in this process, regardless of their role as consumers, producers, or distributors, and expand the scope of treatment centers in society.

Some suggestions that can be proposed are:

- The legislature should pay greater attention to addressing the deficiencies and loopholes in the law to prevent criminals from exploiting these gaps or ambiguities in legislation.
- The Algerian legislature must improve its legal system regarding drug use and trafficking and consider drug users as patients who require treatment in specialized addiction centers, rather than as criminals.
- It is necessary to change the legal description of some physical forms associated with drug use and trafficking from misdemeanors to felonies and also to increase the severity of penalties from incarceration to imprisonment or by increasing the amounts of fines.
- Additionally, the legislature should impose harsh penalties on smugglers due to the seriousness of their crimes.

Footnotes :

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