

X1300EY
REFER TO
CIA

Sub-Saharan Africa: New Importance as a Transshipment Area [REDACTED]

Sub-Saharan Africa's historic role as a small-scale exporter of marijuana to Europe is expanding to include transshipping Southwest Asian heroin and South American cocaine. Increased shipments of hard drugs through Africa en route to the United States are a marked departure from concentrated use of European channels and underscore the traffickers' determination to extend and diversify operations. One result of this heightened trafficking is escalating drug abuse and increased cultivation of illicit drugs within Africa. Another is the potential for increased tensions in US-African diplomatic relations as the drug issue begins to surface in bilateral discussions. [REDACTED]

Why Africa?

The immediate cause for Sub-Saharan Africa's emergence as a transshipment zone and trafficking center is most likely the increased law enforcement pressure on traditional smuggling routes into the United States and Europe. The strategic location of the African continent with airline connections between Southwest Asia and US and European distribution points makes it a likely transshipment zone. In many cases, Southwest Asian and Middle Eastern expatriates living in Africa provide the initial links between smugglers, sources of supply, and the ultimate consumer. Muslim African nationals also have some advantages in gaining access to normally closely held drug networks in Islamic Pakistan. Communities of African expatriates in the United States and Europe, particularly Nigerians, often provide contacts for home-country drug traffickers seeking to establish markets. We judge that the abundant supply of cocaine out of South America will encourage traffickers not only to develop the African market but also to explore new smuggling routes through Africa into the United States. [REDACTED]

In addition to these external factors, Africa's widespread economic and political problems facilitate illicit narcotic activities. An underpaid, corrupt bureaucracy makes it easy for drug traffickers to strike lucrative deals with government officials. At the same time, economic hardships make many people

susceptible to recruitment as couriers and to perform other kinds of tasks for traffickers. In many countries the overall political environment is easily exploited by drug smugglers. [REDACTED]

Expanding Trafficking Center

We believe that the transshipment of Southwest Asian heroin and opium through Africa poses an immediate threat to US drug interdiction efforts. [REDACTED] the amount of Golden Crescent heroin transiting African nations, particularly Nigeria and Ghana, is steadily increasing. The number of Nigerian heroin smugglers arrested at US airports increased sixfold from 1983 to 1984. [REDACTED]

Nigeria is the most highly developed, large-scale drug-smuggling center in Sub-Saharan Africa. Murtala Muhammed Airport—the air hub of West Africa—is considered to be a key transit point.

[REDACTED] to counter greater US interdiction and enforcement efforts, Nigerian traffickers are expanding centers of operations to cities throughout the United States, Canada, Latin America, Europe, Southwest Asia, and East Asia. One report indicates some Nigerian couriers travel through Mexico into the southwestern United States, and others from Europe to Tokyo and on to the United States. The increasing sophistication of Nigerian traffickers—mobilizing hundreds of couriers often of different nationalities with multiple passports—suggests they will pose an even greater problem for law enforcement in the future. [REDACTED]

Heroin shipments also move along the coastal highway linking Nigeria and neighboring Benin, Togo, Ghana, and Ivory Coast. [REDACTED] that Lebanese, Indian, Pakistani, and Syrian expatriates use this route for hashish and heroin destined for the United States. [REDACTED]

F(b)(1)
F(b)(3)
(S)

~~Secret~~

DI NR 85-005
December 1985

██████████ Kenya and Mauritius are developing as transshipment centers comparable to Nigeria. Kenyan Customs officials express concern over the increasing flow of illicit narcotics through Mombasa—first port of call for ships originating in Southwest Asia—and Nairobi. Less than 1 percent of all containerized cargo in Mombasa is examined, and there is ample opportunity to offload contraband prior to docking. In Mauritius, authorities report that imports of opium and heroin from the Golden Crescent are increasing. Brown Sugar—a liquid heroin and caffeine mixture whose fumes are inhaled after being burned on a piece of paper—has become a local drug abuse problem of particular concern to law enforcement officials. ██████████

We have only limited information on heroin and opium trafficking groups and routes elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa. ██████████ large-scale trafficking groups smuggle unknown quantities of heroin from Pakistan through Kenya, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana for sale in South Africa. It is possible that some of this heroin is also shipped on to the United States. ██████████

Evidence of *cocaine* transshipment through Sub-Saharan Africa is less extensive than that for heroin. We believe, however, that recent developments indicate the emergence of a cocaine network between South America and Sub-Saharan Africa that probably has links to US markets:

- ██████████ an increased number of cocaine seizures at Murtala Muhammed Airport over the last two years. In each case, the cocaine arrived from Brazil for onward shipment to European and African destinations. One route allegedly used by traffickers runs from Bolivia to Brazil to Lagos.
- A Ghanaian trafficking group—known to import Peruvian cocaine for export to Europe and the United States—is examining additional smuggling routes to increase volume of shipments to the United States, ██████████
- ██████████ the increased availability of cocaine in West Africa

to the growing number of airline flights and routes between Brazil and Nigeria, Senegal, and Ivory Coast.

• ██████████ cocaine traffickers in South Africa are selling discounted, trial-size “lines” of cocaine to expand their market. One international trafficking group is said to smuggle cocaine into South Africa through Cape Town. ██████████

Trafficking and use of *marijuana* occur throughout Africa. Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, and the West African countries are major suppliers of marijuana products to European and, to a lesser extent, US illicit markets. Marijuana trafficking from all Sub-Saharan African countries to Europe showed an increase in 1984—13 tons or 12.5 percent of all marijuana seized—

██████████ We judge that much of the marijuana trafficking follows trading lines established with Europe during the colonial period. Sub-Saharan Africa’s European orientation does not, however, preclude the development of US routes. ██████████

██████████ in early 1985 Nigerian and Ghanaian trafficking groups tested a route to North America via The Gambia and London. In addition, there are recorded incidents of Malawian-produced marijuana—usually smuggled through seaports in South Africa and Mozambique—as well as marijuana from Swaziland and Madagascar being imported into the United States. ██████████

A growing drug control problem in Africa is the influx of *mandrax* (methaqualone) from India and West Germany. Mandrax, a synthetic sedative, is generally smuggled through Kenya, Malawi, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Zaire, and Swaziland for final sale in South Africa. ██████████

██████████ Pakistani and Indian nationals appear to control the traffic between Southwest Asia and eastern Africa. Recent allegations implicating Zambian officials and prominent businessmen in mandrax smuggling, however, imply more direct local involvement. Future use of these smuggling channels for other drugs is a distinct possibility should efforts by mandrax traffickers continue unimpeded. ██████████

Nigeria, Ghana, and Ivory Coast in order to supply the cocaine market in Europe and Asia. [REDACTED]

Local Drug Problems and Enforcement

Sub-Saharan Africa's growing drug abuse problem is an outgrowth of its increased use as a trafficking area. Drugs diverted while in transit support a burgeoning addict population. Mounting evidence of hard drug use among Ghanaian, Nigerian, Kenyan, Ivorian, and Mauritian nationals has aroused government concern over the debilitating effect of drug abuse on society.

[REDACTED] report that high-level concern is prompting requests for US aid and technical assistance to combat the drug problem. We judge that the continued economic recession and social tensions will contribute to higher levels of drug abuse. [REDACTED]

Extensive marijuana cultivation in Africa and imported mandrax support a large user population. Traditionally, marijuana use was restricted to the aged for the reduction of pain. Recent reports, however, point to the appearance of marijuana abuse in urban centers and among the youth. Although South Africa is still the leading center of mandrax abuse worldwide, there is evidence to suggest growing user populations in the transit countries of Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. [REDACTED]

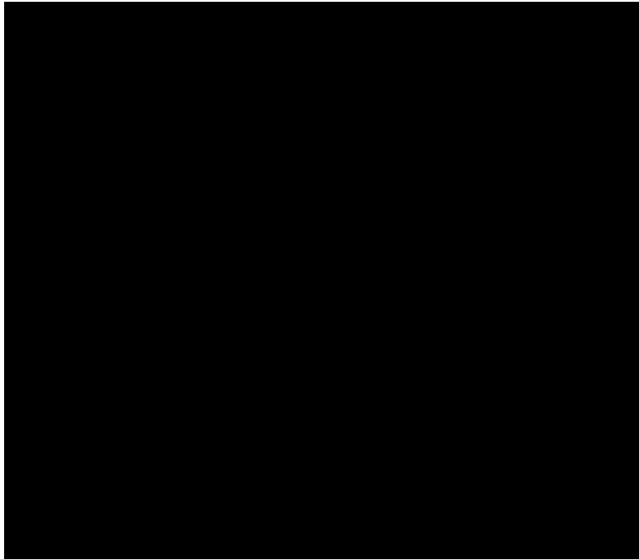
Regional and local drug enforcement capabilities have not kept pace with the rapidly expanding narcotics business in Sub-Saharan Africa. Official efforts are limited by insufficient funds, manpower, and training; widespread corruption; and low government priority for the drug problem. Stiff penalties for the cultivation, trafficking, sale, and use of illicit narcotics exist but are rarely implemented. In some cases, fear of tribal reprisal inhibits governments from strenuously prosecuting offenders. The thrust of government enforcement activities is to crack down on low-level couriers, but this has little or no impact on the drug trade. [REDACTED]

A Tradition of Drug Cultivation

[REDACTED]

Marijuana cultivation has existed for many years, but some evidence suggests that the cultivation of marijuana is becoming increasingly commercial, supplying the international trafficking networks operating in Africa rather than the traditional domestic market. As far back as 1983, [REDACTED]—a key source for high-grade marijuana for international drug traffickers supplying Europe—reported the presence of British drug syndicates recruiting local farmers to cultivate marijuana for export. Other evidence suggests that foreign nationals control large segments of the Kenyan illicit drug business. [REDACTED] suspected Indian and Italian—with alleged ties to organized crime in Italy—expatriate involvement in drug trafficking and marijuana production. We have reports of Australian, Ugandan, and Pakistani participation in drug smuggling through Nairobi. Substantial amounts of marijuana shipped from Kenya, as well as from Angola, Uganda, and The Gambia, are reported to be controlled by trafficking groups using the West African coastal highway. [REDACTED]

Climatic conditions are suitable for *opium poppy* and *coca plant* cultivation in Sub-Saharan Africa. We have sporadic reports but no evidence of extensive production. [REDACTED] poppy cultivation in the southeastern part of the country in 1984. [REDACTED] detected opium poppy cultivation in Rwanda, Kenya, and Uganda and coca farms in the highlands of Guinea. [REDACTED] alleges traffickers promoted coca production in [REDACTED]



- Marijuana cultivation in Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Swaziland, and Lesotho reportedly exceeds estimated local demand. We believe exports of marijuana products to Europe will continue to increase and may lead to onward shipment to the United States.
- Increased mandrax imports to Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Mozambique, and South Africa suggest a growing addict population in these countries. Moreover, we judge that smuggling routes may eventually be used for other drugs [redacted]

We judge that the narcotics issue will take on greater importance in US-African bilateral relations. Embassy officials in Kenya report US interests are being directly affected by Kenya's enhanced role as an international distribution center for illicit narcotics. The port of Mombasa is a major liberty station for the US Navy, raising concern about drug use by US personnel. [redacted] in Nigeria, the number and intensity of the searches of Nigerians entering the United States have elicited threats of reciprocal treatment of US nationals entering Nigeria. [redacted] expressed concern about the potential spillover effect on other issues being discussed among Nigerian and US officials. [redacted]

The expanding nature of drug smuggling operations is prompting greater regional cooperation among African nations. Last June, government officials from Benin and Togo assisted in a French-initiated effort to curb the traffic of heroin, cocaine, and marijuana to France and the United States via Cotonou, Lome, and Accra. Attempts to curb trafficking networks based in Lagos from extending into other West African countries led Burkina and Ghana to conclude an agreement to curb trafficking and cooperate on drug abuse. Similar agreements, including joint marijuana eradication efforts, are under consideration between South Africa and Swaziland. We believe that, in addition to enhancing regional efforts, Sub-Saharan African countries may begin looking to the United States for funding and technical assistance. [redacted]

Future Trends

Cultivation and trafficking of illicit narcotics occur throughout Africa, but we judge that several more countries are likely to become involved on the same scale as Kenya and Nigeria:

- Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Togo, Ivory Coast, Senegal, The Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Mauritius, Seychelles, and South Africa are developing extensive opium-, heroin-, and cocaine-trafficking networks within Africa as well as between Southwest Asian and South American sources and US and European markets. We expect narcotics operations to strengthen amid continuing economic and political problems.