

Drug Transit and Distribution, Interception and Control

# International Drug Control and Trafficking Issues



Allison N. Meehan  
Editor

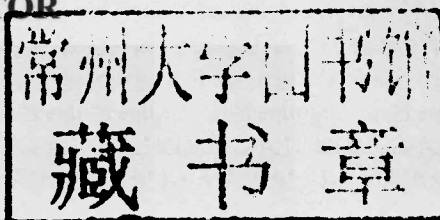
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DRUG TRANSIT AND DISTRIBUTION, INTERCEPTION AND CONTROL

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ALLISON N. MEEHAN

EDITOR



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**DRUG TRANSIT AND DISTRIBUTION, INTERCEPTION AND CONTROL**

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## PREFACE

Revenue from the illegal drug industry provides international drug trafficking organizations with the resources to evade and compete with law enforcement officials; penetrate legitimate economic structures through money laundering; and, in some instances, challenge the authority of national governments. This new book provides an overview of U.S. international drug control policy. It describes major international counternarcotics initiatives and evaluates the broad array of U.S. drug control policy tools currently in use.

Chapter 1- This report provides an overview of U.S. international drug control policy. It describes major international counternarcotics initiatives and evaluates the broad array of U.S. drug control policy tools currently in use. The report also considers alternative counterdrug policy approaches to current initiatives and raises several counterdrug policy issues and considerations for policy makers.

Chapter 2- Drug trafficking is viewed as a primary threat to citizen security and U.S. interests in Latin America and the Caribbean despite decades of anti-drug efforts by the United States and partner governments. The production and trafficking of popular illicit drugs—cocaine, marijuana, opiates, and methamphetamine—generates a multi-billion dollar black market in which Latin American criminal and terrorist organizations thrive. These groups challenge state authority in source and transit countries where governments are often fragile and easily corrupted. Mexican drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) largely control the U.S. illicit drug market and have been identified by the U.S. Department of Justice as the “greatest organized crime threat to the United States.” Drug trafficking-related crime and violence in the region has escalated in recent years, raising the drug issue to the forefront of U.S. foreign policy concerns.

Chapter 3- Africa has historically held a peripheral role in the transnational illicit drug trade, but in recent years has increasingly become a locus for drug trafficking, particularly of cocaine. Recent estimates suggest that in recent years, apart from late 2008 and 2009, between 46 and 300 metric tons of South American cocaine may have transited West Africa en route to Europe. Recent cocaine seizure levels are sharply higher than those in the late 1990s and early 2000s, which in all of Africa rarely exceeded 1 metric ton a year. Africa’s emergence as a trafficking nexus appears to have resulted from structural shifts in international drug trafficking patterns, including heightened European demand for cocaine, international counternarcotics pressure driving drug traffickers away from traditional trafficking routes, and the operational allure for traffickers of low levels of law enforcement capacity and high rates of corruption in many African countries.

Chapter 4- Drug-related violence in Mexico has spiked in recent years as drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) have competed for control of smuggling routes into the United States. Drug trafficking issues are prominent in Mexico because the country has for at least four decades been among the most important producers and suppliers of heroin, marijuana and (later) methamphetamine to the U.S. market. Today it is the leading source of all three drugs and is now the leading transit country for cocaine coming from South America to the United States. Although previous Mexican governments had accommodated some drug trafficking in the country, when President Felipe Calderón came into office in December 2006 he made battling the Mexican drug trafficking organizations a top priority. He has raised spending on security and sent thousands of troops and federal police to combat the DTOs in states along the U.S.-Mexico border and throughout the country. In response to the government's crackdown, the DTOs have responded with escalating violence.

Chapter 5- The overall goal of the U.S. National Drug Control Strategy, prepared by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), is to reduce illicit drug use in the United States. GAO has issued more than 20 products since 2000 examining U.S.-funded international programs aimed at reducing the supply of drugs. These programs have been implemented primarily in drug source countries, such as Colombia and Afghanistan, as well drug transit countries, such as Mexico, Guatemala, and Venezuela. They have included interdiction of maritime drug shipments on the high seas, support for foreign military and civilian institutions engaged in drug eradication, detection, and interdiction; and rule of law assistance aimed at helping foreign legal institutions investigate and prosecute drug trafficking, money laundering, and other drug-related crimes.

Chapter 6- The Department of Defense (DOD) leads detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs into the United States in support of law enforcement agencies. DOD reported resources of more than \$1.5 billion for fiscal year 2010 to support its counternarcotics activities.

Congress mandated GAO report on DOD's counternarcotics performance measurement system. Specifically, this report addresses the extent to which (1) DOD's counternarcotics performance measurement system enables DOD to track progress and (2) DOD uses performance information from its counternarcotics performance measurement system to manage its activities. GAO analyzed relevant DOD performance and budget documents, and discussed these efforts with officials from DOD and the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP).

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## *Chapter 1*

# INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY

*Liana Sun Wyler*

## SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of U.S. international drug control policy. It describes major international counternarcotics initiatives and evaluates the broad array of U.S. drug control policy tools currently in use. The report also considers alternative counterdrug policy approaches to current initiatives and raises several counterdrug policy issues and considerations for policy makers.

Illegal drugs refer to narcotic, psychotropic, and related substances whose production, sale, and use are restricted by domestic law and international drug control agreements. Common illegal drugs include cannabis, cocaine, opiates, and synthetic drugs. International trade in these drugs represents a lucrative and what at times seems to be an intractable criminal enterprise, affecting countries worldwide and generating between \$100 billion and \$1 trillion in illicit profits per year. Revenue from the illegal drug industry provides international drug trafficking organizations with the resources to evade and compete with law enforcement officials; penetrate legitimate economic structures through money laundering; and, in some instances, challenge the authority of national governments. Despite apparent national resolve to address international narcotics trafficking, tensions appear at times between U.S. international drug control policy and other U.S. foreign policy goals and concerns. Pursuit of international drug control policies can sometimes negatively affect national interests by exacerbating political instability and economic dislocation in countries where narcotics production is entrenched economically and socially. Drug supply interdiction programs and U.S. systems to facilitate the international movement of legitimate goods, people, and wealth also are often at odds. The high priority of terrorism in U.S. foreign policy has resulted in increased attention to links between drug and terrorism groups; a challenge facing policy makers, however, is how to avoid diverting counterdrug resources for anti-terrorism ends in areas of potentially low payoff.

Congress is involved in all aspects of U.S. international drug control policy, regularly appropriating funds for counterdrug initiatives, conducting oversight activities on federal counterdrug programs, and legislating changes to agency authorities and other counterdrug policies. Major U.S. programs to combat drug production and trafficking exist in the Andean region of South America, Afghanistan, and Mexico. The U.S. government is also involved in developing several new counternarcotics programs, including in West Africa, the Caribbean (Caribbean Basin Security Initiative), and Central America (Central America Regional Security Initiative). Through its appropriations and federal oversight responsibilities, the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress may chose to continue tackling several emerging policy issues concerning U.S. international drug control policy, including the role of the Department of Defense in counterdrug foreign assistance; the balance between alternative development and eradication programs; and how to address the vast array of cross-cutting and transnational dimensions of the international drug trade, ranging from police corruption to drug-related violence to links between drug trafficking organization and terrorist groups.

## INTRODUCTION

Illegal drugs refer to narcotic, psychotropic, and related substances produced, traded, or used in contravention to domestic law or international drug control agreements.<sup>1</sup> Narcotic drugs include cannabis, cannabis resin, coca leaf, cocaine, heroin, and opium. Psychotropic substances include ecstasy,<sup>2</sup> LSD,<sup>3</sup> amphetamine, and methamphetamine. Examples of other related substances include precursor chemicals used to make narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances—such as ephedrine and pseudoephedrine—which are used to make methamphetamine, and potassium permanganate, which is used to make cocaine. With few exceptions, production and sale of controlled substances is legally permitted only if used for medical and scientific purposes.

Illegal drug use generates a lucrative underground trade that affects virtually every country in the world. Estimates of the global proceeds from illegal drugs vary significantly, ranging from \$100 billion to more than \$1 trillion per year.<sup>4</sup> These proceeds are laundered and invested through foreign banks and other financial institutions, providing transnational drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) with resources to penetrate legitimate economic structures; undermine the rule of law through corruption, extortion, or more violent forms of influence; and, in some instances, challenge the authority of national governments.

Globally, between 172 million and 250 million people (between 4% and 5.8% of the global population) are estimated to be at least casual drug users, while a smaller subset of these, between 18 million (0.4%) and 38 million (0.9%), are termed problem drug users; the latter category constitutes most illegal drug consumption.<sup>5</sup> U.S. data indicate that approximately 35 million people in the United States (14.4% of the U.S. population) are at least casual drug users and slightly less than 5 million (1.9%) are problem drug users.<sup>6</sup> The Western Hemisphere has traditionally been the main consumer of cocaine and cocaine-type drugs, with Europe's demand for cocaine rising in recent years. Europe and Asia have been the traditional markets for opiate- type drugs, including heroin.

Among illegal drugs, cocaine and heroin are considered most problematic for international welfare and security.<sup>7</sup> Both cocaine and heroin are plant-derived drugs, cultivated and harvested in typically low-income countries or in countries with uneven economic development and conflict-ridden regions of the world. With regard to cocaine, the majority coca bush cultivation is concentrated in three countries in South America (Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia). For heroin, opium cultivation is concentrated mainly in Southwest Asia (Afghanistan and Pakistan), but also in Southeast Asia (Burma/Myanmar and Laos); a small amount of opium is also cultivated in Colombia and Mexico, mainly for heroin consumption in the United States. In total, the United Nations estimates that approximately 735 metric tons of heroin were produced in 2007, with approximately 19% seized by authorities before consumption; while approximately 994 metric tons of cocaine were produced in 2007, with approximately 41.5% seized.<sup>8</sup>

Major trafficking routes connect the drug producers with the drug consumers, with highly sophisticated DTOs controlling the various aspects of the supply chain. Current transit hotspots include Mexico (for drugs produced in South America and destined for the United States), West Africa (for cocaine destined for Europe and heroin en route to Europe and the United States), and all the countries surrounding Afghanistan (heroin destined to Europe and elsewhere). The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) considers Mexican DTOs the “greatest organized crime threat” to the United States and estimates that the combination of Mexican and Colombian DTOs “generate, remove, and launder” between \$18 billion and \$39 billion in wholesale drug proceeds annually.<sup>9</sup> Besides the Mexican and Colombian DTOs, other major DTOs include the West African/Nigerian DTOs and Southwest and East Asian DTOs. While DTOs are commonly identified by their nationality of origin, they are known to be aggressively transnational and poly-criminal—seeking to expand their consumer markets, to diversify their criminal enterprises and product variety, and to explore new transit points and safe havens with low law enforcement capacity and high corruption. Many of them also have links to other illicit actors, including arms traffickers, money launderers, terrorists and insurgent groups, and corrupt officials.

## U.S. Policy Context

Illegal drugs first emerged in U.S. policy debates as a national security threat in the late 1960s—and has been perceived mainly through a security and law enforcement lens, among successive Administrations as well as Congresses, ever since. In a 1971 press conference, then-President Richard Nixon identified illicit drugs as America’s “public enemy number one.”<sup>10</sup> That same year, Congress enacted a chapter into the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to define U.S. policies and authorities relating to international narcotics control.<sup>11</sup> In 1986, President Ronald Reagan declared narcotics trafficking a threat to U.S. national security.<sup>12</sup> That same year, Congress expanded drug interdiction authorities and criminal penalties for drug trafficking.<sup>13</sup> Successive administrations have continued to feature combating the illicit drug trade prominently among U.S. national security objectives. At the same time, Congress continues to exercise its oversight responsibilities on U.S. counternarcotics policy and appropriate funds for international counternarcotics programs.

Perceived threats to U.S. interests from the global illicit drug industry include threats to American lives and money, as well as systemic threats to international security. Drug threats to American lives and money include health consequences of drug use, infiltration of foreign DTOs into U.S. territory, drug-related violence and potential spillover effects, drugs as a source of illicit income to fund insurgent or terrorist group attacks on U.S. civilian and military personnel domestically and abroad, and the economic cost of the illicit drug market on legitimate American businesses and productivity. The consequences of a thriving illicit drug trade co-located in a U.S. combat zone are illustrated today in Afghanistan, where some portion of the approximately \$3 billion to \$4 billion in drug-related proceeds annually help facilitate the current insurgency.<sup>14</sup> In other regions, such as in the Western Hemisphere, Americans have been murdered, taken hostage, and tortured for their involvement in counternarcotics operations—highlighting the past and ongoing dangers associated with the international drug trade.<sup>15</sup> Currently, many observers are concerned about the potential spread of DTO-related violence from Mexico into the United States. Moreover, several groups listed by the U.S. Department of State as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) are known to be involved in drug trafficking, including but not limited to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)/KongraGel, and the Tamil Tigers.<sup>16</sup>

Observers suggest that systemic threats to international security include the undermining and co-optation by major international DTOs and their criminal associates of legitimate social, political, and economic systems through corruption, extortion, and violence. In the process, a transnational network of criminal safe havens are established in which DTOs operate with impunity. As in the recent emergence of West Africa as a major cocaine transit hub for Latin American drug traffickers, DTOs prey on states with low capacity for effective governance or the enforcement of the rule of law. This can exacerbate pre-existing political instability, post-conflict environments, and economic vulnerability. As the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) explains:

Drug traffickers use their war-chests to attack vulnerable countries, through business acquisitions, corruption and violence. These processes inevitably converge, as at stake is more than just money-laundering and intimidation: drug cartels buy more than real estate, banks and business. They buy elections, candidates and parties. In a word, they buy power.<sup>17</sup>

By many accounts, drug trafficking, state weakness, political corruption, and powerful DTOs are part of a seemingly self-perpetuating cycle.<sup>18</sup> On the one hand, a drug trafficking presence in a country can increase corruption and undermine political stability, while on the other hand, social and political instability may be causal factors for attracting a thriving drug industry. Further, academic literature on conflict duration indicates that control of a lucrative illegal drug trade in the hands of a particular political actor, rebel or insurgent group can lengthen a conflict. State powers in the hands of a DTO through deeply entrenched kleptocracy serve as a force multiplier to enhance a DTO's power by harnessing the capacity of a state's infrastructure—roads, seaports, airports, warehouses, security apparatus, justice sector, and international political sovereignty—to further the DTO's illicit business aims.

The Director of National Intelligence, Dennis Blair, presented the intelligence community's annual threat assessment to Congress in February 2010 and, among other issues, highlighted narco-threats to political and regional stability, illicit finance for insurgents and

terrorist groups, and the expanding role and capabilities of organized crime in the illicit drug trade.<sup>19</sup> The threat assessment made reference to the following key trends:

1. The Afghan Taliban received in 2008 “up to \$100 million in opium, cash, and goods and services from the opiate trade in Afghanistan.” This makes the drug trade the largest source of local funding for the Taliban-dominated insurgency.
2. Drug trafficking organizations and related drug violence “undermine basic security” in parts of Mexico and Central America.
3. International organized crime networks, including drug traffickers, have improved their capacity to gather intelligence related to law enforcement pressure against their organizations. As a result, they “pose a growing threat to the United States.”
4. The Taliban, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and Hizballah are cited examples of terrorists or insurgent groups known to be involved in drug trafficking.
5. Well-established organized criminal groups, which have not historically been involved in producing narcotics—including those in Russia, China, Italy, and the Balkans—are now expanding their ties to drug producers to develop their own distribution markets and trafficking networks.

## International Policy Context

At the international level, drugs and related threats have been subjects of recent discussion. In December 2009, the U.N. Security Council met to debate the threat posed by drug trafficking to global security, with a particular focus on drug trafficking effects on the stability of Africa.<sup>20</sup> The Executive Director of the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) briefed the Security Council, stating that drugs were enriching not only organized crime but also terrorists and other anti-government forces. In February 2010, the U.N. Security Council followed up with a subsequent debate on threats to global peace and security posed by drug trafficking and other organized criminal activity. The framing of illicit drugs as an international security issue represents a recent—and somewhat controversial—development, as drug issues have traditionally been considered to be domestic social and economic issues.<sup>21</sup>

Although drug trafficking has been an issue of international policy concern for more than a century and a subject of longstanding multilateral policy commitment, tensions appear at times between U.S. foreign drug policy and policy approaches advocated by independent observers and some foreign countries. Many U.S. analysts would argue that the confluence of political and security threats surrounding international drug trafficking necessitates a policy posture that emphasizes the disruption and dismantlement of the criminal actors and organizations involved in all aspects of the drug trade. At the same time, however, other observers argue that security and law enforcement approaches to international drug control have failed to achieve notable successes in “eliminating or reducing significantly” the supply of illicit drugs—a goal the United Nations committed in 1998 to achieve by 2008 (and in 2009, recommitted to achieve by 2019).<sup>22</sup> The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for example, argues that international concern with “public security” during the past decade has

overshadowed other key tenets of drug control policy, including public health and drug demand reduction.<sup>23</sup> Numerous international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also argue that greater emphasis should be placed on policies that emphasize harm reduction efforts to address and prevent the adverse health and social consequences; programs to promote treatment, rehabilitation, and social re-integration for drug users; as well as sustainable and comprehensive alternative development projects.<sup>24</sup>

An emerging block of observers, mainly but not limited to observers and policymakers from Latin America, is calling for the consideration of alternatives to the prohibitionist international drug control regime currently in place. Their recommendations broadly support shifts in drug policy similar to how many European countries approach illegal drugs, with an emphasis on neutralizing the health impacts of drug users and focusing on harm-reduction techniques. In February 2009, a non-governmental, independent study group called the Latin American Commission on Drugs and Democracy—co-chaired by former presidents from Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico—concluded that the current international drug control model has failed. In May 2009, former Mexican President Vicente Fox publicly commented that it is time to consider alternative drug policies, including legalizing certain drugs.<sup>25</sup> In August 2009, to add to the existing collection of countries that variously support some amount of drug decriminalization, a new law in Mexico went into effect, decriminalizing “personal use” amounts of marijuana, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and other internationally sanctioned drugs.<sup>26</sup>

While many critics remain against changes to the current drug control policy status quo, advocates for a reevaluation of current drug policies appear to be gaining ground.<sup>27</sup> Antonio Maria Costa, the UNODC’s executive director, acknowledges in the UNODC’s most recent annual World Drug Report, released June 2009, that a growing number of observers have concluded that the current international drug control policy “is not working.” Although arguing against drug legalization, Costa nevertheless supports a new look at, and possible rebalancing of, the current mix of international drug policies.<sup>28</sup>

Such calls for a new look at international drug policies are being advocated from an increasingly growing sector of the policy community.<sup>29</sup> It remains unclear whether recent policy debates can translate into lasting improvements to reduce the production, trafficking, use, and consequences of illegal drug trade. However, changes could affect a range of foreign policy considerations for the United States, including foreign aid reform, counterinsurgency strategy (particularly in Afghanistan), the distribution of domestic and international drug control funding, and the relative balance of civilian, law enforcement, and military roles in anti-drug efforts.

In 2010, the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress may choose to continue its oversight and assessment of existing U.S. international drug policy. In this process, several questions may emerge:

- In what ways are counternarcotics strategies facilitating or driving recent increases in drug-related violence? Are spikes in drug-related violence common or inevitable consequences of heightened counternarcotics operations? In what ways might governments mitigate or dampen current and potentially future increases in drug-related violence?
- How do counternarcotics policies interact with counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and anti-money laundering priorities, particularly in countries such as Afghanistan, where the U.S. government may have an interest in all three issues?

- What role should the U.S. military play in providing foreign counternarcotics assistance?
- How should U.S. policymakers weigh the benefits of aerial eradication as a counternarcotics policy tool with the social, financial, and political costs it may incur?
- To what extent is it a common phenomenon that human rights are violated over the course of drug-related investigations and operations? In what ways might human rights violations undermine or threaten drug control policies?
- To what extent should U.S. counternarcotics policy take into account economic development, social development, and health and harm reduction programs and are such efforts sufficiently coordinated with international and bilateral partners?
- How do counternarcotics policies interact with related foreign policy goals of anti-corruption, justice sector reform, and improving the rule of law?
- How might international regulatory and legal constraints limit the reach of U.S. counternarcotics policy and potentially offer drug syndicates foreign safe havens? And what legislative options might be available to prevent such legal safe havens from existing?

## U.S. NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY

U.S. involvement in international counterdrug policy rests on the central premise that helping foreign governments combat the illegal drug trade abroad will ultimately curb illegal drug availability and use in the United States. To this end, the current Administration maintains the goal of reducing, and ultimately cutting off, the international flow of illegal drugs into the United States.

Since 1999, successive Administrations have developed an annual National Drug Control Strategy, which describes the total budget for drug control programs and outlines U.S. strategic goals for stemming drug supply and demand.<sup>30</sup> The international component of the Administration's 2009 National Drug Control Strategy centers on the goal of disrupting the market for illegal drugs through foreign counternarcotics assistance, targeted economic sanctions against drug traffickers, diplomatic efforts, and international law enforcement investigations.

### Funding

For FY20 11, the Administration has requested approximately \$15.5 billion for federal drug control programs, up from \$15 billion enacted for FY20 10 (see **Table 1**).<sup>31</sup> Of this, 39%, or \$6 billion, is requested for international and interdiction programs.

**Table 1. U.S. Drug Control Funding (in U.S. \$ millions).**

Activities <sup>a</sup>	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY20 10 Enact.	FY 2011 Req.
International	1,084.5	1,105.1	1,159.3	1,393.3	1,434.5	2,050.2	1,824.6	2,082	2,288	2,308
Interdiction	1,913.7	2,147.5	2,534.1	2,928.7	3,287.0	3,175.9	2,901.4	2,910	3,640	3,727
Domestic	7,783.2	7,967.5	8,312.2	8,462.2	8,377.7	8,618.0	8,550.3	9,164	9,105	9,519
Total	10,781.4	11,220.1	12,005.6	12,784.3	13,144.1	13,844.0	13,276.3	15,156	15,033	15,554

Source: Adapted from Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), National Drug Control Strategy, FY20 10 Budget Summary, May 2009, p. 15; and ONDCP, National Drug Control Budget FY20 11 Funding Highlights, February 2010. Totals may not add due to rounding.

a. “International” refers to activities primarily focused on or conducted in areas outside the United States, including a wide range of drug control programs to eradicate crops, seize drugs (except air and riverine interdiction seizures), arrest and prosecute major traffickers, destroy processing capabilities, develop and promote alternative crops to replace drug crops, reduce demand, investigate money laundering and financial crime activities, and promote the involvement of other nations in efforts to control the supply of and demand for drugs. “Interdiction” refers to activities designed to intercept and disrupt shipments of illegal drugs and their precursors en route to the United States from abroad. “Domestic” refers to activities related to domestic demand reduction, including federal drug treatment and drug prevention programs, as well as domestic law enforcement.

## Agency Roles

Several U.S. agencies are involved in implementing U.S. international counternarcotics activities in support of the Administration's National Drug Control Strategy.<sup>32</sup> These agencies include the following:

- **Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP).**<sup>33</sup> Located within the Executive Office of the President, ONDCP establishes U.S. counterdrug policies and goals, and coordinates the federal budget to combat drugs both domestically and internationally. Every year, ONDCP's director, sometimes referred to as the U.S. drug czar, produces the National Drug Control Strategy and the federal counterdrug budget summary.
- **Department of State.**<sup>34</sup> The Secretary of State is responsible for coordinating all international counterdrug programs implemented by the U.S. government, including foreign counternarcotics assistance. The State Department identifies fighting the production, transportation, and sale of illegal narcotics among its primary goals.<sup>35</sup> Every March, the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) produces the International Narcotics Strategy Report (INCSR), which describes the efforts of key countries to attack all aspects of the international drug trade, including anti-money laundering during the previous calendar year.
- **Agency for International Development (USAID).** USAID provides assistance for long-term economic and social development. The USAID Administrator serves concurrently as the State Department's Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance, with a rank equivalent to Deputy Secretary of State. USAID plays a role in counternarcotics development assistance, especially regarding alternative livelihood programs, which are designed to offer alternatives to farmers that will enable and encourage them to discontinue planting poppy and other illicit crops.
- **Department of Defense (DOD).** DOD maintains the lead role in detecting and monitoring aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs into the United States<sup>36</sup> and plays a key role in collecting, analyzing, and sharing intelligence on illegal drugs with U.S. law enforcement and international security counterparts. In addition, DOD provides counternarcotics foreign assistance to train, equip, and improve the counternarcotics capacity and capabilities of relevant agencies of foreign governments with its Counternarcotics Central Transfer Account appropriations.<sup>37</sup>
- **Department of Justice (DOJ).** The Attorney General is responsible for federal law enforcement and to ensure public safety against foreign and domestic threats, including illegal drug trafficking. This translates into an array of responsibilities that include law enforcement operations, drug-related intelligence analysis, prosecution and criminal justice activities, as well as police and justice sector training. Primary agencies under DOJ that focus on international drug control include the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC), the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF), and the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC).