



WORLD DRUG REPORT 2000

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FOREWORD

by the Secretary-General of the United Nations



Globalisation offers the human race unprecedented opportunities. Unfortunately, it also enables many anti-social activities to become “problems without passports.” Among these are drug abuse, which brings misery to millions of families around the world every year, and drug trafficking which cynically promotes and exploits that misery for commercial gain. If the international community is to deserve its name, it must respond to this challenge.

Happily, it is beginning to do so. For decades we heard only reports of dramatic increases in drug production, drug trafficking and drug abuse. Such problems do not disappear overnight, but some of these trends are now changing, and even being reversed. Thanks to international cooperation, illicit production and manufacture of drugs like cocaine and heroin has stabilised, and in some cases declined. In some of the world’s main markets, illicit drug *consumption* is now declining, too.

No less encouraging have been recent demonstrations of concerted political will. In 1998 the United Nations General Assembly held a Special Session on drugs, and established targets and deadlines to substantially reduce the world’s drug problem by the year 2008. This year world leaders – gathered in larger numbers than ever before, at the Millennium Summit – have resolved to redouble their efforts to implement that commitment. Clearly, they share the belief that there are solutions to this global problem, *if* we all work together towards shared goals. We may be at a historic turning point.

The *World Drug Report* offers, as its name implies, a global overview of the drug issue. It contains information from many sources, which should help not only policy makers and scholars, but also the general public, to measure progress towards the ambitious goals that the General Assembly has set. This information suggests that, provided we do redouble our efforts, and do not relax our vigilance, we may at last be on our way to a world in which people can live their lives free from drug abuse, from drug trafficking, and from related crime and violence.

Handwritten signature of Kofi A. Annan in black ink.

Kofi A. Annan

SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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