

# Paraguay

## International Narcotics Control Strategy Report Volume I

### Drug and Chemical Control

Paraguay faces various challenges in its efforts to reduce narcotics trafficking and production. Paraguay is the second largest marijuana producer in the Western Hemisphere, with the majority grown along the Paraguay-Brazil border and exported to Brazil and Argentina. It is also a transit country for Andean cocaine, primarily destined for Paraguay's neighbors or onward shipment to Europe and other overseas markets. Drug traffickers exploit the landlocked country's porous borders, clandestine airstrips, extensive internal waterways, and under-resourced, often corrupt law enforcement and judicial institutions. International criminal organizations operating along the Paraguay-Brazil border also continue to engage in arms trafficking, money laundering, counterfeiting, and other illegal activities linked to narcotics trafficking. In December 2016, Paraguayan authorities arrested six alleged-affiliates of the Mexico-based Sinaloa Cartel in Asuncion. According to media reports, the arrested individuals were allegedly seeking to establish a cocaine trafficking route from Colombia to Europe via Paraguay.

The volume of illegal drugs seized by the National Anti-Drug Secretariat (SENAD) and the Paraguayan National Police (PNP) declined in 2016 from the previous year. In 2016, SENAD seized and destroyed 276 metric tons (MT) of processed marijuana (compared to 362 MT in 2015) and 1.57 MT of cocaine (compared to 2.23 MT in 2015). The PNP seized and destroyed 137.6 MT of processed marijuana (compared to 148.3 MT in 2015), and seized 19 kilograms of cocaine (compared to 919 kg in 2015). Cannabis eradication also declined in 2016. SENAD eradicated 1,298 hectares (ha) of marijuana (compared to 1,995 in 2015), while the PNP eradicated 413 ha of marijuana (compared to 795 in 2015).

The United States and Paraguay are parties to an extradition treaty that entered into force in 2001. There is no mutual legal assistance treaty in force between Paraguay and the United States, though both are parties to various multilateral conventions which provide for cooperation in criminal matters.

The United States works closely with Paraguayan enforcement officials and provides technical support to Paraguay's efforts to disrupt drug trafficking organizations and strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks in a joint effort to combat drug trafficking and associated crimes, including money laundering, terrorist financing, and arms trafficking. The United States hosted multiple training events throughout 2016 and assisted with weapons tracing and exploiting seized cell phones. U.S. operational support facilitated drug seizures, arrests, and the presentation of cases for prosecution. Further efforts to enhance Paraguayan interagency coordination, improve the judicial system's ability to prosecute cases quickly and effectively, confront corruption, and strengthen law enforcement efforts would help to further deter narcotics production and trafficking.