

Cocaine Consumption in Brazil Stops Upswing

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Cocaine consumption remained stable in Brazil between 1997 and 2004, after a period of growth between 1987 and 1997. This information comes from this year's edition of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC) annual World Drug Report, which was released yesterday, June 25, in the UN Information Center in Rio de Janeiro.

According to the report, which was presented by the coordinator of the UNODC's Drugs and HIV/AIDS Projects for Brazil and the Southern Cone, Cíntia Freitas, the volume of cocaine seized by government agents doubled between 2004 and 2005, from 8 tons to 15.8 tons.

Brazil, together with Surinam and, at times, Panama and Argentina, are stopovers on the drug shipment route between the Andean region and Europe.

According to Brazilian government officials, 70% of the cocaine that arrives in Brazil comes from Colombia, 20% from Bolivia, and 10% from Peru. Shipments arrive in Brazil and are sent to Europe, frequently passing through Africa.

Data indicate that there are 13.4 million cocaine users worldwide, corresponding to 0.3% of the population between the ages of 15 and 64. In 2004 there was a moderate decline, which had not occurred in a long time.

Most of the drug is consumed in the Americas, especially in North America, which has 6.5 million cocaine addicts and represents nearly half the world's demand for the drug. The indices of consumption in Brazil and Argentina remain stable, while they rose in Paraguay, Colombia, and Peru.

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