

Drug Abuse Kills 200,000 People Each Year

Wednesday, 27 June 2012 16:58



Drug abuse kills about 200,000 people worldwide each year, according to a new United Nations (UN) report.

Global treatment for drug abuse would cost \$250 billion per year if everyone who needed help received proper care, according to the UN. Fewer than one in five people who need treatment actually receive it, according to the Associated Press.

Crimes committed by people who need money to finance their drug habit, as well as loss of productivity, add tremendous costs for many countries, the report notes.

The UN estimates that about 230 million people, or 5 percent of the world's population, used illegal drugs at least once in 2010. In the United States, female drug use was two-thirds the male rate, while in India and Indonesia, females constituted only one-tenth of those using illegal drugs.

The 2012 World Drug Report cited an increase in synthetic drug production worldwide, "including significant increases in the production and consumptions of psychoactive substances that are not under international control." Overall, use of illegal drugs remained stable during the past five years, at between 3.4 and 6.6 percent of the world's adult population. Marijuana was the most widely used drug.

Coca bush cultivation has decreased 33 percent over the past 12 years. Seizures of methamphetamine more than doubled in 2010 compared with 2008. In Europe, seizures of Ecstasy pills more than doubled.

"Heroin, cocaine and other drugs continue to kill around 200,000 people a year, shattering families and bringing misery to thousands of other people, insecurity and the spread of HIV," the Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Yury Fedotov, said in a news release. He added that as developing countries emulate industrialized nations' lifestyles, it is likely that drug consumption

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will increase.

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