



CENTRAL ASIA INTELLIGENCE-SHARING CENTRE INAUGURATED IN KAZAKHSTAN

On 9 December, the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) was inaugurated in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The Centre is part of on-going efforts to strengthen law enforcement cooperation among countries on the front line of drug trafficking from Afghanistan. According to estimates from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 75-80 tons of heroin are trafficked annually from Afghanistan to the Russian Federation via Central Asia. Only around 5 percent is seized in the region.

Drug trafficking through Central Asia “poses a threat to security by enriching and empowering criminal groups and anti-government forces; it undermines development by creating instability and widening corruption, and it poses a risk to health by spreading drug addiction and HIV”, warned the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in a message delivered by his Special

Representative Miroslav Jenca who is also Head of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. “This transnational problem requires a regional solution,” said the Secretary-General’s message.

“CARICC will facilitate the exchange of intelligence to identify and disrupt trafficking networks, strengthen regional criminal justice capacity, and build security and confidence among neighbours,” said Mr. Jenca on behalf of the Secretary-General. “The Centre also offers an opportunity to strengthen partnership among organizations active in the region, including the United Nations, SCO, the OSCE, the EU, NATO, CSTO, CIS, ECO(*) and others,” he said.

“The Centre is a concrete achievement of our common efforts,” said Kairat Umarov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan. “I hope that in the nearest future we’ll be able to see the results of the work of the

Centre, ideally a significant decrease of drug trafficking through our countries and a reduction of the drug threat in general.”

Counter-narcotics partnership in Central Asia has been strengthened over the past few years among Member States of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Sub-regional Drug Control Cooperation which includes the five countries of Central Asia, the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan, UNODC and the Aga Khan Development Network. On 8-9 December, the 8th review meeting of the MOU was hosted by Kazakhstan. Francis Maertens, Deputy Executive Director of UNODC, hailed CARICC as “one of the major achievements of the MoU states, of which we can all be proud”. He stressed that Central Asia benefits from UNODC’s largest regional drug and crime portfolio (US\$78 million a year and rising).



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION

The 8th MoU review meeting was organized by the Government of Kazakhstan in line with its obligations under the MoU on sub-regional drug control cooperation signed in 1996.

The meeting was divided into the expert and high level segments. The expert level session was focused on the discussion of the situation in Afghanistan and its implication to the MOU region as well as on the prospects for further cooperation. The Working group on elaboration of the final document of the 8th MOU meeting was resulted in agreeing on the text of the Declaration which was subsequently approved at the high level segment on 9 December.

The expert level meeting was instrumental in initiating discussion on the draft UNODC Regional Programme,

as well as on agreeing on the need for a more balanced approach for the law enforcement cooperation to be combined by the interaction in demand reduction, treatment and rehabilitation areas.

The high level segment was addressed on behalf of the UN Secretary-General by Ambassador Mr. Jenča, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, Head of the Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. UNODC delegation was led by Mr. Francis Maertens, Deputy Executive Director of UNODC, who addressed the meeting on behalf of the UNODC Executive Director.

During the MOU discussion the following main ideas were put forward: elaboration of an action plan under the MOU framework aimed at better

cooperation with Afghanistan; organization in 2010 of the Ministerial level meeting under the Paris Pact framework; further elaboration of UNODC Regional Programme for Central Asia and South Caucasus to be sent to the MOU states for consideration; revival of the "6+3" political mechanism to address the situation in Afghanistan. Some of these provisions that were supported by all delegations were reflected in the MOU Declaration. The latter was adopted without any change at the high level MOU segment on 9 December by all MOU members except Uzbekistan. The MOU meeting was combined with inauguration of CARICC, which was attended by more than 100 representatives from MOU members and observers.





FIFTEEN YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP IN CENTRAL ASIA

The year 2009 marks the 15th anniversary of UNODC's full-fledged presence in Central Asia. Now, 15 years after the establishment of the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia in 1993, UNODC has offices with ongoing project activities in all the Central Asian states and Azerbaijan. UNODC's programme portfolio has almost tripled in volume and coverage. It has grown from few projects in 1993 to 26 million dollars in 2004, to almost 70 million dollars in 2009, and it continues to expand. With a heavy emphasis on counter-narcotics assistance, the Regional Office manages an integrated program that links major national counter-narcotics projects in every country in the region with regional projects focusing on intelligence-led investigations and regional cooperation, including the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC), precursor controls, Computer-Based Training (CBT), controlled deliveries and bor-

der liaison offices. National projects focus on the establishment of dedicated drug law enforcement bodies, such as Drug Control Agencies, border security and mobile interdiction units.

It was just 15 years ago that the Central Asian states started engaging in drug control cooperation by establishing their first national drug control institutions and competent authorities, developing legal bases for drug control in line with the United Nations drug control conventions and protocols, and fine-tuning national strategies and action plans. Now, Central Asian governments have significantly advanced in all these areas. Development of the Memorandum of Sub-Regional Drug Control Cooperation of 4 May 1996 between the Central Asia states, the Aga Khan Development Network and UNODC was a milestone in the establishment of a regional cooperation framework in the Central Asian re-

gion and beyond. Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation subsequently joined the MOU. UNODC is proud of being part of these efforts and implements a number of regional activities in the context of the MOU. During these past 15 years, UNODC has enjoyed continuous support by and recognition from international partners. It is with great appreciation, therefore, that UNODC would like to acknowledge the role of the European Commission, the informal initiative of the Foreign Anti-Narcotics Community (FANC), the NATO-Russia Council, the Mini-Dublin Group in Central Asia, OCHA, the OSCE, the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan, CARHAP, UNDP, UNOHCHR, UNICEF, the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, WHO, the World Bank as well as the donor countries and organizations that made this success possible.

“SYSTEM OF DRUG CONTROL WAS DEVELOPED IN THE REGION”

General Rustam Nazarov, director of the Drug Control Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan



The year 2009 marks 15 years of the presence of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the Central Asian region. Let's not forget that it was the time of collapse of Soviet Union. It was not simple time for the countries of the region; there was a lack of cooperation between them. Drugs flow was increasingly affecting the Central Asian states and posed a threat to their stability and security. UNODC's presence in the region helped to unite efforts and contributed to strengthening regional cooperation. During these 15 years, your office provided comprehensive assistance in strengthening law enforcement capacities as well as regional cooperation. I would say that a system of drug control was devel-

oped in the region due to UNODC's support. As a result, we have today a drug control system which is on line with international norms and respective UN conventions. Programmes of Complex Measures on Countering Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking were developed and implemented in each country. The Drug Control Agency under the President of Tajikistan, which was established with UNODC's assistance, is part of this regional cooperation. In 10 years, the DCA seized more than 9.5 tons of drugs having only 400 staff members. I believe that the support provided to countries is UNODC's main achievement for 15 years of cooperation with the Central Asian countries.



EXPERTS DISCUSS WHERE DRUG MONEY GOES

The Technical Working Group meeting on financial flows linked to the illicit production and trafficking of Afghan opiates was held on 2-3 November 2009 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The meeting was a first attempt to gather concerned countries and relevant international organizations to discuss how to concretely implement the recommendations contained in the Paris Pact Orange paper, which have been endorsed by Paris Pact policy makers in December 2008. The working group included experts from and gathered experts from 8 countries (namely Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, United Kingdom, the United States and Uzbekistan) as well as 4 international organizations (EurAsian Group on money-laundering, Interpol, UNODC and

World Customs Organization). The technical Working Group discussed, in particular, the implementation of recommendations I [Increase the knowledge] and III [Increase national and international cooperation] of the Paris Pact Orange Paper action plan. Regarding the implementation of Recommendation I, a draft questionnaire was developed with the purpose to assess lessons learned, methods used and possible challenges faced by Paris Pact partners and affected countries in dealing with financial flows linked to the illicit production and trafficking of Afghan opiates. The draft questionnaire will be circulated to all Paris Pact partners and concerned countries and organizations for comments prior to submission to relevant partners in January 2010.

Regarding the implementation of Recommendation III, the participants suggested that the relevant Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) from the jurisdictions affected by the illicit Afghan opiate financial flows should meet on a regular basis to exchange knowledge and share experience regarding the financial flows to/from Afghanistan derived from Afghan drug trade. More precisely, the concerned FIUs will be expected to present/share information on individuals, entities or groups linked to drug production and trafficking offences and their laundering, the sectors where drug money is being injected and reintegrated, how is the money circulated, etc. It was decided that the first FIUs meeting should take place around mid-May 2010.

UNODC INTENSIFIES EFFORTS TO FIGHT CORRUPTION GLOBALLY AND REGIONALLY

"Since corruption hurts us all, we must all unite to fight it,"

Mr. Antonio Maria Costa

Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Corruption poses a serious challenge to all countries. In the political realm, it undermines democracy and good governance by flouting or even subverting formal processes. In the economy, corruption undermines entrepreneurship and discourages investment by generating considerable distortions and inefficiency. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has warned that corruption kills development, and is one of the biggest impediments to reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

In response to this threat, UNODC is becoming increasingly active in preventing corruption. On 13 November at the Conference of States Parties in

Doha, countries agreed to a mechanism to monitor implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). The legally binding Convention obliges 142 countries to prevent and criminalize corruption, promote international cooperation, recover stolen assets, and improve technical assistance and information exchange. Now, all countries will be monitored every five years to see how they are living up to their obligations.

While progress is taking place globally, it is also taking place regionally. In Uzbekistan, a new anti-corruption project is set to begin in 2010. The two-year project is aimed at establishing a more solid foundation to prevent and combat corruption through effective implementation of the UNCAC. Activities such as the elaboration of a National Anti-Corruption Action Plan, the organization of prac-

tical and result-oriented workshops for public officials and civil society, of media campaigns to encourage the reporting of acts of corruption, and modules on ethics and good governance for inclusion in the training programmes for law enforcement, prosecutorial and judicial personnel, as well as in the country's education system. This wide-reaching project is the first of its kind in the region and will serve as a model for future projects in Central Asia.

This year, on International Anti-Corruption Day (9 December), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are joining forces to raise awareness about the devastating effects of corruption through the "Your NO to corruption counts!" campaign.



MODERN CHALLENGES TO SECURITY AND STABILITY IN CENTRAL ASIA

The Senior Legal Adviser delivered two presentations on the main requirements of the UN CAC in the areas of prevention, criminalization, international cooperation and asset recovery, and relevant challenges in Central Asian countries, as well as organized an interactive game and moderated a session on corruption at the OSCE Central Asian Student Leadership Seminar entitled “Modern Challenges

to Security and Stability in Central Asia” held from 1 to 3 December in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The seminar was aimed at familiarizing the students from Central Asian countries with major contemporary threats to security and contributing to reviving of so called Central Asian Youth Network. About 37 students from all 5 Central Asian countries participated in the Seminar.

UNODC PUBLICATIONS

The Compendium of International Legal Instruments related to Human Rights Protection and Countering Crime (1000 copies) was developed and published by ROCA/GLO900 at the request of the Research Centre under the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan within the framework of cooperation based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNODC/ROCA and the Supreme Court. The Compendium is designed for the use by judges and aimed at familiarizing them with the main UN instruments on human rights and UNODC mandated conventions to directly refer to them when delivering justice.

BRINGING NATIONAL LEGISLATION INTO COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

A legislative drafting workshop on the implementation of anti-terrorism instruments in the domestic law of the Republic of Kazakhstan took place in Astana on 29 September-1 October 2009. The seminar was organized in cooperation with the US State Department, NSOI and the US Department of Justice, who contributed to the nuclear smuggling part of the seminar. The participants came from the General Prosecutor’s Office, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of International Affairs, Legislative Institute of the Ministry of Justice, Parliament and Customs Service. The seminar provided a form for discussing the analysis of Kazakhstan’s legislation in terms of its compliance with the universal anti-terrorism instruments together with amendments and proposals on how to bring domestic legislation into compliance with anti-

terrorism instruments. There was productive, item by item discussions of the proposals among the participants of the seminar, during which changes and amendments to the working paper were agreed upon.

At the end of the seminar, an action plan was adopted by the Kazakh Government together with representatives of Terrorism Prevention Branch, UNODC.





LAW ENFORCEMENT MEETING

On 18 December 2009, UNODC, in partnership with the BOMCA-CADAP programme, facilitated a end-year law enforcement roundtable meeting. More than 50 participants from international organizations, embassies and national law enforcement agencies and the Ministry of Health of Turkmenistan attended. The national delegation was headed by the chairman of the State Drug Coordination Committee. The roundtable discussions focused on summing up the activities of 2009 in the

following areas: combating illicit drug trafficking, cross border cooperation, HIV prevention public awareness and the rights of vulnerable groups. The roundtable, which has become an annual event held at the end of the year, brings together all partners working on drug, crime and terrorism to discuss their achievements for the year and shared their initial work plans for the upcoming year.



ORGANIZED CRIME INVESTIGATION

On 9-20 November, the NATO-RUSSIA project on counter narcotics training for Afghan and Central Asian law enforcement personnel organized a two-week Drug Enforcement and Organized Crime Investigations Training for Tajik law enforcement officers from the Drug Control Agency, Ministry of Interior and State National Security Service. Trainees updated their professional skills during this training course conducted by a team of instructors from the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC). The training focused on different aspects of drug law enforcement, surveillance, and methods and techniques of operational activities to target national and transnational organized criminal groups..

ONE MORE DRUG CHANNEL WAS TERMINATED WITH CARICC'S SUPPORT

An international operation to suppress the activities of transnational drug trafficking groups was successfully completed on 18 October. The main objective of the operation was drug supply prevention. It was managed by NSC in cooperation with Federal Security Service of Russia (FSB) and Kyrgyz Governmental National Security Service. The operation, coordinated by Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC), focused on drug trafficking from Kyrgyz Republic through

Kazakhstan into Russia. As a result of the successful operation, an international drug channel has been halted in Astana, Kazakhstan on 29 October. This success adds the CARICC's recent accomplishments in assisting law enforcement to fight international drug trafficking. In Rubtsovsk town (Altayskiy region of the Russian Federation (RF)), the Federal Security Service Directorate (FSSD RF) arrested two recipients of drug shipments and 5.3 kg of heroin was

seized. In September in the south of Kazakhstan, two similar operations on drug supply prevention were carried out. Additionally, on the 7 September in Maktaaralskiy region, another drug supply channel, which stretched from Tajikistan to Kazakhstan, was stopped. These international operations demonstrate CARICC's ability to directly contribute to the prevention of drug trafficking.



HIV/AIDS

AIDS EPIDEMIC UPDATE RELEASED. MIXED REVIEWS FOR CENTRAL ASIA

On 25 November, UNAIDS released the AIDS Epidemic Update 2009. The report outlined some worrying trends in Central Asia such as low antiretroviral treatment coverage. By December 2008, 22% of adults in the Eastern Europe and Central Asian region in need of treatment were receiving it—less than the global average for low- and middle-income countries (42%). Also of concern was the growing number of HIV cases: while globally the number of HIV cases increase by 20% between 2001 and 2008, the Eastern Europe and Central Asian region the number of cases increased by a staggering 67%. On the other hand, the report favorably reflected the high coverage of services to prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission. In December 2008, the coverage of services to prevent mother-to-child

transmission exceeded 90% in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The report also noted the changing patterns of the epidemic; In Central Asia, epidemics that were once characterized primarily by transmission among injecting drug users are now increasingly characterized by significant sexual transmission. UNODC, as a co-sponsor of the Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), is the lead agency for HIV and AIDS prevention and care among injecting and other drug users and in prison populations. Since the first detected cases of HIV in the region, in the early 1990s, UNODC has been working to stem the flood of new cases in Central Asia. UNODC's goal has been to assist States in implementing large-scale and wide-ranging interventions to prevent HIV and to

provide care and support to people living with HIV and AIDS. From 2004-2008, UNODC ran two large-scale regional projects which sought to prepare media to cover drug abuse prevention issues and increase the knowledge and skills of teachers, schoolchildren, parents and community leaders on issues of healthy lifestyles, drugs and HIV/AIDS. UNODC currently has one ongoing regional HIV prevention project "Effective HIV/AIDS prevention and care among vulnerable populations in Central Asia." This project provides policy advice to Governments, has strengthened educational curricula for medical practitioners, and has assisted national counterparts in developing five-year Action Plans on introducing and scaling up opiate substitution therapy.

EDUCATIONAL DAY FOR RISK GROUPS

UNDP and UNODC in cooperation with National AIDS Center of Turkmenistan conducted an educational event for risk groups including sex workers and their partners. The event took place in the Ashgabat nightclub "RUHYBELENT" on 29 November 2009. The event was aimed at raising the awareness of risk groups about the consequences of drug use. Similar

educational events are held on the regular basis. This event promoted healthy lifestyles, gender equality and human rights. The event went beyond discussion of current social problems and also prompted participants to suggest ways of solving them. To stimulate the participants' interest in the event and to make it more effective, enter-

tainment and contest were included in the program and the winners were awarded with valuable prizes. The project helped risk groups to learn more about negative consequences of drug use. In addition, the participants of the event will spread the received information among their peers; thereby raise the number of people reached by the project.





UNODC COMMEMORATES WORLD AIDS DAY

In the framework of the UN Cares strategy, the UNODC HIV/AIDS Peer Educators Team conducted a special campaign for UNODC staff devoted to the World AIDS Day on 1 December 2009. More than 30 employees took part at the event and wore red ribbons to show their respect for the day. UNAIDS representatives also attended the campaign.

An opening speech was made by Mr. Kamran Niaz, Regional Adviser on Drug Dependence Treatment and

Epidemiology. He conveyed the message of Mr. Antonio Maria Costa devoted to World AIDS Day. With this year's theme "I am living my rights", Mr. Costa's message underscored the right to health, and human rights against stigmatization and discrimination.

Mr. Akmal Rustamov, National Project Officer on HIV/AIDS made a presentation on the current HIV/AIDS situation in the world and Central Asia including the latest statistics

on HIV cases and HIV prevalence among the most at risk populations. This session was followed by the HIV edutainment games which actively involved all of the participants and gave them chance to test their knowledge of HIV/AIDS, the modes of HIV transmission and the ways to



UNODC HIV Peer Educators with UNAIDS Staff



Scenes from HIV education games

protect oneself from HIV. Peer educators provided information on HIV prevention and made a demonstration of condom use. The winners of the contests were awarded with special prizes and certificates.

SPORT AGAINST DRUGS

The Ministries of Health and Sport/Tourism with cooperation of UNAIDS, UNODC, UNCHR and UNICEF conducted annual social event for students to raise awareness among young people about the destructive effect of drugs on the human body. Over 200 students took part in the event which took place in the Ice Palace in Ashgabat on 1 December – World AIDS Day.

During the event, athletes from the ice sport complex demonstrated their skills on the ice rink. In addition to entertainment, informational materials and red ribbons, the symbol of World AIDS Day, were distributed among the youth. The participants also had the opportunity to speak with narcologists and AIDS specialists.

This type of event is beneficial in drawing attention to the problem of drug use and discouraging young people from using drugs.

HIV PEER EDUCATION

In the framework of the UN Care strategy, a series of training workshops were conducted to prepare HIV Peer Educators and establish a support network among selected staff of each UN agency in Uzbekistan. The key purpose of the network is to ensure easily accessible, confidential support to UN employees and their family members on issues related to HIV/AIDS prevention. Peer Educators will be available to provide support and counseling internally for their colleagues. They will provide accurate information on the transmission and prevention of HIV/STIs and the availability and quality of HIV/STI-related services.

On 17 December 2009, the staff of UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia, Mr. Kamran Niaz, Regional Adviser on Epidemiology and Drug Treatment, Mr. Akmal Rustamov National HIV/AIDS Project Officer and Ms. Sevara Karimova Research Assistant were awarded certificates and officially became member of the UN Peer Educators and Support Network in Uzbekistan, which consists of about 20 people.

UN Cares – the UN system-wide workplace programme on HIV – was launched in May 2008. It is designed to reduce the impact of HIV on the UN workplace by providing a number of services including education and voluntary counseling and testing. UN Cares promotes a workplace free from stigma and discrimination based on HIV status.

