



First Steering Committee Meeting of the UNODC Programme for Central Asia took place in Tashkent

Heads of the Drug Control Agencies, representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of five Central Asian countries as well as donor's representatives gathered on 22 February in Tashkent to discuss progress in implementation of the UNODC Programme for Central Asia. The meeting was hosted by the Uzbek Government.

Ms. Ashita Mittal, UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia made the detailed presentation of Programme achievements, challenges faced and fund raising efforts. Mr. Alexandre Schmidt, Chief of UNODC Regional Section for Europe, West and Central Asia, HQ Vienna gave the overview of the perspectives from the Central Asian countries towards the UNGASS 2016. Participants reviewed and approved the Work Plan for 2016, Terms of Reference for the Programme Steering Committee as well as selected the Chair and Co-Chair of the Committee which is the highest level of direct Programme authority and guidance.



Increasing access to professional forensic services in Kyrgyzstan

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Embassy of the United States of America marked a new milestone in their partnership to improve the rule of law at a groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of a new forensic laboratory in the Kyrgyz capital on March 10, 2016.

Minister of Justice, Ms. Zhyldyz Mambetalieva, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., Mr. Alan Meltzer, and UNODC's Regional Representative for Central Asia, Ms. Ashita Mittal, laid the foundation stone for the new premises of the State Forensics Center (SFC).

UNODC allocated more than 48 million Kyrgyz Soms (630,000 U.S. Dollars) for the construction of the new office for the forensic laboratory. Main donor of these activities is the US State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL).

"Impartial data provided by forensic laboratories is crucial to ensure fair trials and uphold the rule of law," said Alan Meltzer, the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. That is why the US Government is committed to helping the people of the Kyrgyz Republic increase access to professional forensic services."

The State Forensics Centre under the Ministry of Justice is the main provider of the forensic services in the Kyrgyz Republic, handling over 80% of all cases requiring forensic evidence. Jyldyz

Mambetalieva, the Minister of Justice, noted that construction of the new office and laboratory is the first step towards enhancement of this institution's capacity: "The SFC is currently located in old building dating back to the 1940s, which is unsuitable for the forensic laboratory. Thanks to the U.S. funded UNODC project, we are better equipped with establishing a proper management system and gradually aligning forensic services with the international standards," Ms. Mambetalieva said.

UNODC provides technical assistance to UN Member States on forensic services through training and sharing of international best practices, thus contributing to the availability of quality forensic services.

"During the past two years the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia has been supporting professional development of forensic experts in Kyrgyzstan as well as in other countries of the region", – said Ms. Ashita Mittal, UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia. "With the modernization of the SFC's infrastructure, we're



taking another step in our joint endeavor to promote high quality expertise that will help Kyrgyzstan to attain international accreditation for its forensic services in the future," - Ms. Mittal added. The U.S./INL funded project is implemented within the framework of the UNODC Criminal Justice Program in the Kyrgyz Republic. This Program is part of the UNODC Integrated Country Program of Assistance for Kyrgyzstan 2014-2016 and the UNODC Program for Central Asia 2015-2019.

The Government of Japan allocated more than 4,500,000 US dollars for strengthening the cross-border cooperation in Central Asia

The Government of Japan provided a new funding to the project of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) aimed at enhancing cross-border cooperation and the establishment of four new Border Liaison Offices on the Kyrgyz Kazakh and Kyrgyz-Tajik border, as well as providing further support to 12 Border Liaison Offices in the Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan and Republic of Uzbekistan previously established within the UNODC project.

New funding also allow to strengthen the capacities of law enforcement agencies of the Republic of Tajikistan, responsible for border control between Tajikistan and Afghanistan, as well as enhancing the border security in the Khatlon region. The project will assist Border Troops of the State Committee of National Security of the Republic of Tajikistan in enhancing the level of expertise of officers at crossing and establishing working, intelligence-sharing and communications mechanisms between the agencies employed there, in particularly at the area of Shaartuz Border Guard Force. This area of the border is considered as the most vulnerable in terms of drug trafficking. Infrastructure and capacity of Shaartuz Border Guard Force will be significantly strengthened within the project. At least two border posts “Payvand” and “Hoshma” and border post “Tagnob”, located along the “green” border on the Tajik-Afghan border will be constructed and equipped.

Communication, coordination and cooperation between law enforcement agencies are key elements in countering drug trafficking. It remains crucial to build capacities at Border Crossing Points; enhance the level of expertise of officers at crossings; establish intelligence sharing and communication mechanisms be-



tween state agencies within a Border Liaison Office; draft legal and binding documents for inter-agency and cross-border cooperation.

The establishment of BLOs equipped with an adequate enforcement mandate, resources and the capacity to move quickly along the shared borders is a prerequisite to effectively turning intelligence and inter-agency cooperation into successful interdictions. In this manner, BLOs in are intended to form a regional response against all forms of smuggling, including drugs, arms and human trafficking.

In the Japan-Central Asia Dialogue held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in 2014 the Foreign Ministers of the project participating countries emphasized that drug trafficking still remain a threat to regional and international security and underlined the necessity to further en-

hance border control in the region. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan expressed their gratitude to the Government of Japan for their support to create new Border Liaison Office (BLO) institutions with excellent infrastructure and requested to further support the project in order to ensure continuity of the existing inter-agency and cross border cooperation mechanism between the countries.

“Japan is glad to have this opportunity of providing support to implementation of the project, which received high appraisal of the beneficiary countries for successful accomplishment of the concrete results,” stressed Mr. Kazuya Harada, Charge d’affaires a.i. of the Embassy of Japan in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Port Control Units opened in Chukursay and Angren in Uzbekistan

Two Port Control Units (PCUs) were opened in Chukursay and Angren Customs posts in Uzbekistan on 15 March 2016 in the framework of “UNODC-World Customs Organization (WCO) Global Container Control Programme - Regional Segment for Central Asia and Azerbaijan”.

Premises for both PCUs were provided by the Uzbekistan which joined Container Control Programme in December 2013. Port Control Units were equipped with computer and voffice equipment in addition to the ContainerComm secure communication system with the State Customs Committee’s officers trained.

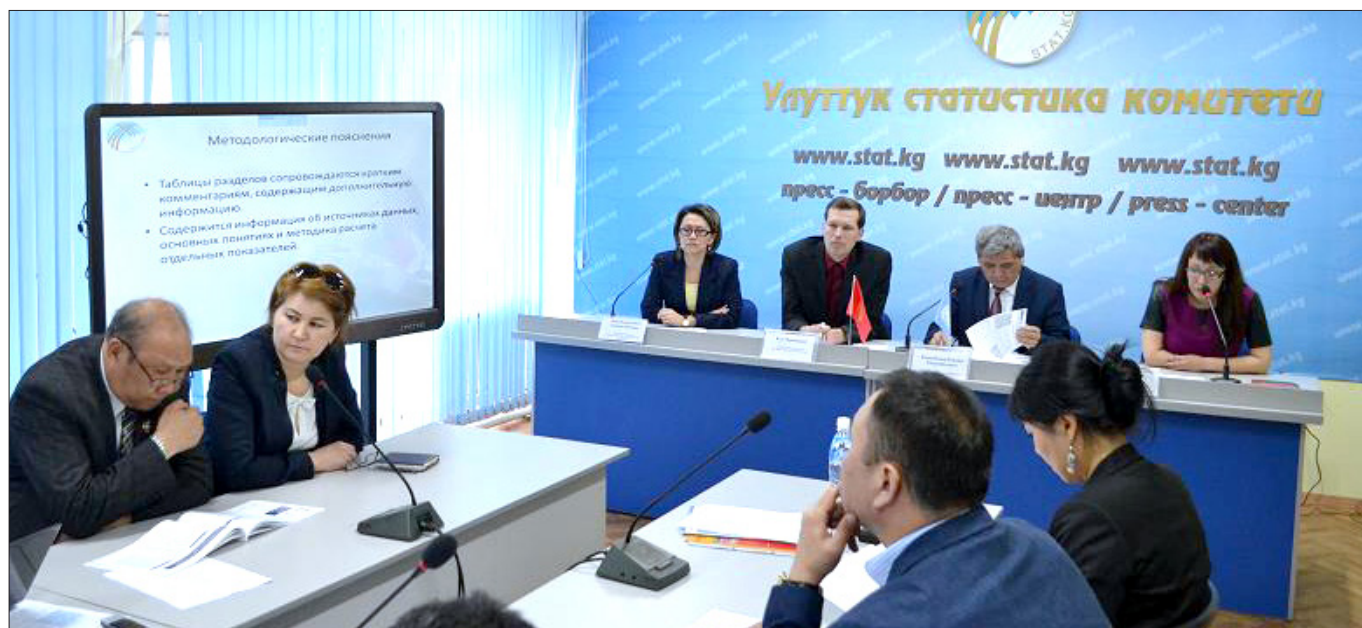
During the opening ceremony, Mr. Ravshan Akramov, the Head of the International Customs Cooperation Department of the State Customs Committee expressed the satisfaction with the effective implementation of the

Container Control Programme (CCP) in Uzbekistan including the establishment of PCUs and provision of practical trainings, mentorship programmes, exchange visits and study tours. In addition, Mr. Akramov informed that starting from April 2016 a new edition of the Customs Code will come into force, by which the new risk management system will be introduced.

Ms. Ashita Mittal, UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia stated that CCP is uniquely placed to assist Government to create sustainable enforcement structures in selected sea and dry ports in order to minimize the risk of shipping containers being exploited for illicit drug trafficking and transnational organized crime.

The CCP Regional Segment for Central Asia and Azerbaijan is funded by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program.

UNODC supports data collection on crime



In Kyrgyzstan, UNODC has partnered with the National Statistics Committee in order to develop and publish a new compilation of crime trends. On 24 March 2016, the new tool, which contains crime statistics covering the period from 2010 to 2014, was officially presented to the public in Bishkek including representatives of the government, civil society, international organizations and media.

Produced with UNODC expert advice and technical support, the compilation analyzes data on specific crimes, the profile of offenders and the work of the criminal justice sector. Among others, the data presented in the compilation shows that the number of crimes registered is generally going down. At the same time, the figures for some offences, such as drug related crimes

and domestic violence reveal an upward trend. Official statistics confirm that crimes are often committed under the influence of alcohol. According to the data, offending is also strongly related to unemployment.

The new compilation was published in Russian language and will soon be made available in Kyrgyz language as well. UNODC's support will al-

low for wide dissemination of the tool among criminal justice practitioners and other relevant stakeholders as a basis for debate on crime prevention and criminal justice in the Kyrgyz Republic during the years to come.

Within the framework of its Programme for Central Asia 2015-2019, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime works to strengthen national capacities to produce, disseminate and use statistics on drugs and crime. The aim of UNODC's assistance in this area is to enable the countries of Central Asia to develop appropriate policies for crime prevention and criminal justice.

Police women: Challenges and Prospects

Conference on role of women in police held on 3-4 March 2015 in Bishkek marked the 5th anniversary of the Police Women Association of Kyrgyzstan.

Minister of Internal Affairs Mr. Melis Turgunbaev, Ex-president of the Kyrgyz Republic Ms. Roza Otunbaeva, members of the Kyrgyz parliament, representatives of the international organizations and diplomatic missions, as well as the civil society representatives, in total 100 participants, took part in the conference. The event was supported by the UNODC in cooperation with OSCE, the British Embassy to Kyrgyzstan, UNDP and the UN Peacebuilding Fund.

The participants discussed women in police role and their professional development. Using this opportunity, the UNODC Programme Office in Kyrgyzstan handed over two vehicles to the Ministry of Interior to promote level of police patrolling including participation of the female police officers.



Conference participants discussed issues such as women leadership, gender policy in law enforcement, mentoring as a tool to promote gender equality and ethnic representa-

tion in police, as well as police interaction with the population and the development of culture of intolerance towards discrimination and gender-based violence.

Uzbekistan in taking ownership of scaling up and ensuring the sustainability of the “Families and Schools Together” programme implemented by UNODC

The meeting of the State Commission on Drug Control chaired by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, held in January 2016, approved the incorporation of the “Families and Schools Together (FAST)” programme into the country’s education system.

The UNODC’s interventions in the field of drug use prevention, HIV/AIDS as well as crime and delinquency among young people, were joint activities between the UNODC project “Prevention of drug use, HIV/AIDS and crime among young people through family skills training programmes in low- and middle-income countries” and the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries. FAST is an award-winning early-intervention programme, which brings parents, children, teachers and the wider community together, to make sure children get the support they need to fulfil their potential at school – and in life. Primary School FAST for children of 7-9 years is an eight week, evidence based, multi-family group programme that supports families by: helping children improve their skills in reading, writing and mathematics – as well as encouraging good behaviour and a positive attitude to school and learning; helping parents get more



involved in their child’s education, so they can support learning and development at home; encouraging stronger bonds between parents and their child, their child’s school, as well as other parents and the wider community. Since 2013, the FAST programme has been successfully implemented in 20 schools of Uzbekistan. 159 teachers, school psychologists, parents and community leaders have been trained on the implementation of the FAST program, with 3 of them becoming trainers. In total, over 400 families benefited from the programme. In 2015, the culturally adapted FAST programme was scaled up in three regions of Uzbekistan

(Tashkent, Samarqand and Namangan). The Family Skills Training Program Resource Centre was established in Tashkent, and is aimed at implementing, scaling up and monitoring activities related to showcasing the benefits of the family skills training programmes to interested organizations. “In our country, the family, community and educational institutions are three pillars that insure life sustainability of children” said Mr. Abdugani Kholbekov, Deputy Minister of Public education of Uzbekistan. “In this regard I would say that family skills training programme is enriching the public education system and helping prevent pupils from risky behaviour”.

Zero Discrimination

UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia joins the Zero Discrimination campaign and Stand Out for the right to respect and dignity of all!

On 1 March, people around the world together celebrated Zero Discrimination Day. This year’s theme is Stand Out and encourages everyone to stand for fair and just societies. Discrimination remains widespread—gender, nationality, age, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or religion can all unfortunately be the basis for some form of discrimination. “When the most marginalized and vulnerable face discrimination and abuse, all of us are diminished,” said United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. “The United Nations is strongly committed to upholding human rights and dignity for all.”

On this year’s Zero Discrimination Day, people are being urged to value and embrace diversity and recognize the diverse set of talents and skills that each person brings—talents that enrich society and strengthen communities. Welcoming diversity in all its forms reinforces social cohesion and brings valuable benefits to societies around the world.



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