

## **PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – MARCH 2009 (a)**

Counter-narcotics and police forces of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan carried out the first-ever joint operation against drug trafficking networks on 8 March 2009, in the framework of an initiative brokered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Enhancing border management cooperation in drug control amongst these countries is the objective of an action plan developed by UNODC in 2007 and better known as the Triangular Initiative. The goals of this initiative are to be achieved through a step-by-step approach that includes both confidence-building measures, information and intelligence exchange and operational activities.

This historical operation was conducted along the joint borders between Iran and Pakistan, as well as along the Iranian borders with Afghanistan. During this operation narcotics were seized and drug traffickers were arrested. The results of this unprecedented operation are being assessed on the margins of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna. Lessons learned will be taken into consideration in planning and executing future joint operations. Consultations held in Vienna in February this year between UNODC senior officials and the Permanent Representatives from Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan to the United Nations provided impetus for the establishment of an intelligence exchange cell in Tehran and eventually the launch of this first operation.

A Joint Planning Cell was established in Tehran at the end of February this year. The three countries have nominated focal points for planning regional operations against trafficking of drugs and chemical precursors, guided by collection and analysis of criminal intelligence. The Joint Planning Cell was instrumental to the launch of this historical operation. It will continue to work in a pilot phase until permanent focal points from the three countries are appointed. The Triangular Initiative is part of the UNODC-coordinated Rainbow Strategy to counter the threat posed by Afghan opiates. This strategy engages both Afghanistan and surrounding countries in finding solutions. It consists of several operational plans targeting seven internationally agreed priority areas including border management, precursor chemicals, financial flows and drug abuse prevention and treatment.

### Background:



The green paper aims to enhance cross-border cooperation in the field of counter narcotics enforcement amongst Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. Launched by policy-makers from the three countries and UNODC in Vienna in June 2007, this action plan sets in motion a series of trust building measures and joint operations, with the goal of information/intelligence sharing and ultimately aiming to block the southern and eastern drug trafficking routes by strengthening control of Afghanistan's borders with Iran and Pakistan, as well as strengthening the Iran and Pakistan borders.

The Rainbow Strategy, largely funded by a Canadian contribution, has seven initiatives, dealing with national border management, cross-border cooperation, the development of intelligence capacities, precursor chemical control, interdiction of drug-related financial flows and demand reduction/anti-HIV efforts. Five of these initiatives have left the design board and are operational. An important principle in the development of the Rainbow Strategy was to develop inter-related but distinct components, in order to facilitate local alliances and encourage convergence around shared interests.

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## **PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – MARCH 2009 (b)**

At his first speech on the U.S. Strategy for Afghanistan last Friday, U.S. President Obama unveiled a new direction for counter narcotics efforts in Afghanistan. This new approach has also been indicated recently by his Special Envoy, Richard Holbrooke, aiming at a *"significant expansion of agricultural sector job creation programmes"* in the fight against the Afghan drug trade.

UNODC predicts a decline in opium cultivation in 2009. However, this is to a great extent a response to market forces, namely over-production and a sliding price for opium, rather than a concerted turn by farmers to alternative livelihoods. Currently, 18 of 34 Afghan provinces are opium poppy free and another seven are within reach. In order to sustain these gains beyond the 2009 harvest, targeted support towards Afghan farmers, their families and communities is required.

In partnership with the Government of Afghanistan, UN agencies and other stakeholders, UNODC strongly supports a holistic approach of counter narcotics in Afghanistan, including agricultural development. UNODC has assessed livelihood strategies in several Afghan provinces and identified the immediate needs of farmers formerly engaged in or at risk of re-engaging in opium cultivation. Examples have included Badakshan and Balkh. As a result of those assessments, these and other provinces received funding for short-term and high impact assistance. In particular, labour-intensive activities were designed to provide paid employment opportunities to households before comprehensive alternative livelihood programmes come into force.

UNODC welcomes the new U.S. approach to enhance the provision of sustainable alternatives for Afghan farmers.

### Background:



The Opium Poppy Free Road Map and Provincial Profiles ("Blue Paper") is one initiative among the seven comprising the Rainbow Strategy.

The Blue Paper supports the Afghan National Development Strategy and the Good Performance Initiative which aim to increase the number of opium-free provinces and to consolidate the progress made over recent years. The report provides indicators for all 34 provinces in Afghanistan and proposes priority areas, thereby helping strategic planning, local ownership within provinces, and coordination among principal actors to tackle the Afghan drug trade.

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## **PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – MARCH 2009 (c)**

For the first time, UNODC and the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) have confirmed a seizure of methamphetamine in Afghanistan.

The seizure of four 1-gram bags of high-purity methamphetamine took place on 31 January 2009 in Helmand province. In the past, reports of methamphetamine seizures in the field and in the border areas of neighboring countries have proven to be false, either inaccurately reported in press articles or inaccurately labeled at the time of seizure. In this case, officers initially believed the drugs to be heroin. Following examination at the CNPA laboratory supported by UNODC, however, CNPA technicians produced a clear confirmation of methamphetamine.

Four grams is a small amount of methamphetamine, yielding around 150 doses if smoked or injected. Nevertheless, with this first seizure Afghanistan has crossed a worrying threshold. The manifold challenges of the opium economy have placed a heavy burden on Afghanistan and the rise of methamphetamine consumption/production would be an unwelcome addition.

The history of the Golden Triangle demonstrates that methamphetamine production can have significant impacts on an opium economy, rapidly transforming a plant-based narcotics challenge into a challenge of tracking large synthetic laboratories. Many countries around the world have reacted too late to the development of methamphetamine markets and now face the increased costs of curing rather than preventing the negative health and social consequences.

UNODC will monitor Afghanistan's methamphetamine situation closely and extends its warm congratulations to our CNPA colleagues, who are further investigating the case.

### Background:



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## **PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – APRIL 2009 (a)**

Afghanistan is the world's opium capital and we estimate that in recent years it has produced more opium than is consumed worldwide. Hundreds of tons have been stockpiled by traders and farmers in the country, which raises the risk of an increased availability of cheap opium and heroin on domestic markets.

There is already a worrying prevalence of heroin and opium abuse in Afghanistan; we estimate there are 25,000 - 30,000 opium addicts and 15,000 - 20,000 heroin addicts in Kabul alone. The former Russian Cultural Centre (RCC) in Kabul is home to a population of at least 600 of these drug addicts, with a further 600 - 800 drug users visiting during the day. Living conditions at the heavily damaged centre are extremely unhygienic and until recently 2 – 4 people died there on a daily basis, mostly from exposure, malnutrition and medical problems related to living conditions.

The majority of drug users are returning refugees and deportees from camps in neighboring countries, and their families are typically still in the refugee camps or in provinces outside Kabul. Many of the residents are injecting drug users and there is concern about the spread of HIV and other blood-borne diseases through the RCC's population and to Afghans beyond.

Together with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and the Ministry of Counter Narcotics (MCN), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and UNODC have initiated a joint UN response to tackle the emergency situation in the RCC, with distribution of food, syringes, provision of health services, detoxification and reintegration assistance. For the 600 RCC residents the joint response has been a success. Unfortunately, it is only a miniature intervention that urgently needs upscaling, meanwhile introducing new and human concepts towards drug addiction and HIV/AIDS.

### Background:



Preventing and Treating Opiates Addiction and HIV/AIDS Epidemics in Afghanistan and Neighboring Countries ("Indigo Paper") is one initiative among the seven comprising the Rainbow Strategy.

The Indigo Paper's action plan aims to improve responses to opioid abuse and HIV in Afghanistan and the countries of South, West and Central Asia. It explains partners' agreed key principles and effective approaches for successful drug abuse prevention; drug dependence treatment and rehabilitation; HIV prevention, treatment and care. It further outlines national and regional activities for the period of 2008 - 2011.

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## **PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – APRIL 2009 (b)**

This week, the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) intercepted around 3,000 kg morphine, a semi-synthetic drug produced from opium. This largest seizure of morphine so far was supported by one of the many successful counter narcotics operations led by NATO/ISAF.

The seizure took place in Achin district of Nangarhar province, which is on the Pakistani border and is a known location of heroin processing laboratories. The morphine, if combined with acetic anhydride, could have yielded approximately 2,000 kg of heroin.

Seizures of morphine have been rare in Afghanistan – according to UNODC’s records, only 479 kg were seized in 2008. Partly, this appears to be the result of well-protected networks of morphine- and heroin-stage labs, which make it easier to intercept opium inputs and heroin outputs than intermediate morphine products.

Unfortunately, seizure ratios overall remain low. UNODC estimates that Afghan authorities seized approximately 0.6% of the total opium equivalents produced in-country in 2008. UNODC’s assistance to Afghanistan’s law enforcement authorities aims to improve their capacity to detect, interdict, and prosecute trafficking.

UNODC extends its congratulations to the Afghan Ministry of Interior for its efforts in countering illicit drug trafficking and to CNPA, which is further investigating the case.

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## **PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – APRIL 2009 (c)**

Last week the Afghan Minister of Public Health H.E. Mohammad Amin Fatehmi and the UNODC Representative Jean-Luc Lemahieu launched the sub-regional project for the provision of comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention and care services to Afghan refugee drug users in Iran and Pakistan and returnees in Afghanistan.

The increased availability of heroin has changed drug use patterns in Afghanistan and neighboring countries from traditional opium smoking and oral consumption to drug injection. This creates greater potential for HIV transmission through the sharing of injecting equipment. The high risk of an HIV outbreak among drug users in Afghanistan has been indicated recently at the former Russian Culture Center in Kabul, which has become the biggest provisional drug treatment facility in the country and is mainly inhabited by returnees from Pakistan and Iran.

The sub-regional initiative will establish a collaborative mechanism among the governments of the three countries and will involve close cooperation with the Ministries of Counter Narcotics and Refugees and Repatriation as well as UNHCR, IOM and UNAIDS. It will enable the provision of comprehensive HIV services for Afghan refugees, helping to reduce the individual and social harm of drug use from compounding the trials of migration.

### Background:



Preventing and Treating Opiates Addiction and HIV/AIDS Epidemics in Afghanistan and Neighboring Countries is one initiative among the seven comprising the Rainbow Strategy.

The Indigo Paper's action plan aims to improve responses to opioid abuse and HIV in Afghanistan and the countries of South, West and Central Asia. It explains partners' agreed key principles and effective approaches for successful drug abuse prevention; drug dependence treatment and rehabilitation; HIV prevention, treatment and care. It further outlines national and regional activities for the period of 2008 - 2011.

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## PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – APRIL 2009 (d)

Last week, the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) seized 210 liters of acetic anhydride, a key chemical precursor in heroin manufacturing. The UNODC supported forensic laboratory of the CNPA has confirmed the confiscated chemicals as acetic anhydride. Based on initial investigation, it appears that it was diverted from a licit source in France, before being placed on board a flight from Delhi to Kabul. The Precursor Control Unit of the CNPA, recently created with the support of UNODC, is conducting the ongoing investigation into the final destination of the seizure.

The cost of acetic anhydride has risen in recent years and UNODC currently monitors a price that generally ranges between USD 300 - 400 per liter in Afghanistan. At this price, acetic anhydride accounts for a significant proportion of heroin processing costs.

UNODC estimates that approximately two thirds of Afghan's opium production is converted into heroin within the country. Seizures of acetic anhydride rose in 2008, but at 14,000 liters they remain a small proportion of the estimated volume that enters Afghanistan. Moreover, most seizures have been random, rather than led by intelligence.

Operation TARCET, facilitated by UNODC in 2008, led to the seizure of approximately 50 tons of precursor chemicals, mainly in Iran and Pakistan. UNODC is now facilitating preparations for Operation TARCET 2009, with an ambition for more effective cross-border cooperation and intelligence-led seizures, including to enable backtracking investigations.

UNODC extends its congratulations to CNPA and colleagues of the newly established Precursor Control Unit, who are further investigating the recent seizure.

### Background:



Operation TARCET ("Red Paper") is one initiative among the seven comprising the Rainbow Strategy.

The Red Paper action plan targets the smuggling of precursors used in heroin manufacture en route to Afghanistan through the implementation of Operation TARCET (**T**argeted **A**nti-trafficking operation in the **R**egion that will enhance **C**ommunication, **E**xpertise and **T**raining). TARCET aims to educate law enforcement officers in identifying and intercepting smuggled consignments of chemicals, including through the use of advanced methods such as controlled deliveries.

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## PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – JULY 2009

UNODC is facilitating the newly created UN working group on Injecting Drug Use (IDU) in Afghanistan and has, together with our partners UNAIDS and WHO, developed a joint initiative to strengthen the response among IDUs affected by the closure of the old Russian Cultural Centre (RCC) in Kabul. As you may recall, to deal with a pressing humanitarian emergency situation, a large number of government, NGOs and UN agencies, had pulled their efforts together and opened the largest make-shift treatment centre in modern Afghan history on the site of what once was a majestic cultural centre.

However, the heavily damaged and unhygienic buildings of the RCC were only of temporary use. After the closure of the RCC, hundreds of drug users have been transferred to treatment and rehabilitation centers, many of them to a newly established one in Jangalak, an eastern district of Kabul. The Jangalak centre also provides night shelter services to drug users. Unfortunately, a few dozens of addicts were not accommodated for and are now scattered around Kabul. The new joint activities of UNODC, UNAIDS and WHO aim to detect and support particularly this 'lost group'. The importance to reach-out has everything to do with the linkage between injecting drug users (IDU) and HIV. The main mode of HIV transmission among reported cases in Afghanistan is exposure to contaminated drug injecting equipment.

Estimations of HIV prevalence in Afghanistan range from 1,000 to 2,000. Out-reach to the IDU group, basic medical care and clean needles are crucial if HIV is to be stopped from spreading. In a study conducted in 2007 among 464 male injecting drug users in Kabul, 3% tested positive to HIV, 50% had shared syringes, 57% had been in prison and 17% reported having injected in prison.

The combination of conflict, availability of drugs and the recent introduction of injecting practices have aggravated the socioeconomic and health consequences of drug use on individuals, families and communities in Afghanistan. Among the multiple reasons that encourage injecting drug use are the search for stronger mind altering effects, easier availability of injectable drugs and the ability to administer doses faster and in a concealed manner, as compared to smoking or oral consumption.

### Background :



Preventing and Treating Opiates Addiction and HIV/AIDS Epidemics in Afghanistan and Neighboring Countries is one initiative among the seven comprising the Rainbow Strategy.

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## **PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – SEPTEMBER 2009**

The Afghan Opium Survey for 2009 was released in Kabul today by H.E. President Hamid Karzai and Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the UNODC. Results from the report suggest “the bottom is starting to fall out of the Afghan opium market” and the coming year is an opportunity to consolidate the gains made before the market stabilises.

In 2009 opium cultivation in Afghanistan decreased by 22%, from 157,000ha to 123,000ha. Although this is a positive overall trend, area under cultivation went up by 11,500ha over several provinces (Nangarhar, Badakshan, Kandahar, Dai Kundi, Badghis and Herat), indicating that stronger efforts must be made in order to hold onto the gains in non-cultivating areas.

The sharp reduction in Helmand is perhaps the most striking feature of this year’s report. This is a much welcomed trend as Helmand alone accounts for approximately 65% of Afghanistan’s total area under opium cultivation. Alongside this, Farah has achieved the greatest proportionate reduction in opium cultivation, down by 40% (approximately 8,000ha) this year (taking into account the shift of provincial boundaries in 2008). With little external support to the province, this result highlights the market correction that is occurring at the national level, with oversupply pushing opium prices down. Wholesale (farm gate) prices have fallen by a third in the past year, from \$70/kg to \$47.9/kg for fresh opium and from \$95/kg to \$63.5/kg for the dry variety.

The loss of earnings is making the drug trade less attractive to farmers, with UNODC figures suggesting that 800,000 people have turned away from opium production. This year, gross income per hectare of poppy shrunk by one quarter to \$3,562/ha, from \$4,662/ha in 2008. This market correction, which started in 2008, must be further stimulated if we want to consolidate the current downward trend and expand its coverage nationally.

By providing a full-spectrum quality of life to rural communities we can reduce their vulnerability and dependence on opium as a cash crop. The Afghan government and international donors are promoting rural development more heavily as the way to sustain pressure on opium cultivation. UNODC welcomes this approach and supports economic development as an end in itself. However, in order for rural development programs to have efficient and immediate counter-narcotics impacts, we need to foster a sense of conditionality among beneficiaries. The full survey is available for download at our website <http://www.unodc.org/>.

### Background:



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## **PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – SEPTEMBER 2009 (a)**

UNODC COAFG is pleased to announce the first seizure under Operation TARCET II. In August 2009, while implementing national operations in preparation for later regional activities, Pakistani authorities seized 4620 litres/kg of acetic anhydride (AA) at Nowshki District Chagi, Balochistan. Precursor chemicals were concealed in 154 plastic cans. Another 120 cans of ammonia spirit and a large quantity of both soda ash and activated carbon were recovered at the site. The chemicals were allegedly destined for Afghanistan, to be smuggled across the Afghan/Pakistani border in small quantities on the back of jeeps. Our Pakistani colleagues are congratulated with this successful effort.

Precursor chemical seizures are also up in Afghanistan. ISAF/ASNF forces intercepted 6,196 litres of AA in various provinces of Afghanistan during January-September 2009. While this is positive news and a turnaround compared to only few years ago, the estimated 725 tons of heroin produced during 2008 require over 10,000 tons of chemicals to be converted from opium.

On a different and equally positive note are the three joint operations which found place within the Trilateral Initiative. We already briefed you on the first one. The second intervention took place on 26-28 July, was coordinated through the Joint Planning Cell (JPC) based in Teheran, and was conducted by Iranian and Afghan CN and Border control forces. Afghan forces arrested 6 smugglers, seized 24 kg of opium, and 34.7 kg of heroin. On the Iranian territory, the Iranian forces seized 196 kg of opium and 175 kg of crack (crystallized) heroin. A month later, on 24-25 August 2009, the Iranian and Pakistani authorities came again action, again coordinated through the JPC, and seized 48 kg of heroin, 231 kg of opium, and 385 kg of hashish.

### Background:



Both the AA and drugs seizures reported above were conducted under the Rainbow Strategy framework, with two out of seven action components of the Strategy directly involved in the planning and implementation of these joint operations:

**Targeting Precursors Used in Heroin Manufacture:** Operation Tarcet, addresses the issue of smuggling in precursors used in heroin manufacture en route to Afghanistan. Striving for complementarity and synergy with existing precursor control projects in the region, the operation promotes a regional response to this problem through a systematic analysis of criminal and forensic intelligence. Its training component provides key law enforcement officers with education on how to identify and intercept chemical consignments using modern methodology.

**Border Management Cooperation in Drug Control amongst Afghanistan, I.R. of Iran, and Pakistan** is designed to promote mutual trust, information and intelligence sharing, with the ultimate goal of planning and conducting joint operations. Joint training and compatibility of telecommunication equipment, intelligence sharing through the Joint Planning Cell in Tehran, posting pilot liaison offices on the borders, and holding a working group to discuss control measures within trade agreements between the countries are among the initiatives envisaged in this action outline. UNODC serves as a Secretariat to this Triangular Initiative, facilitating the delivery of technical assistance and mobilizing financial support for it.

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## PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – OCTOBER 2009

A few days ago the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched a new report ***Addiction, Crime and Insurgency – The transnational threat of Afghan opium***. The report shows the devastating consequences that the 900 tons of opium and 375 tons of heroin, trafficked from Afghanistan every year, have on the health and security of countries along the Balkan and Eurasian drug routes, all the way to Europe, Russia, India and China. It documents how the world's deadliest drug has created a market worth \$65 billion, catering to 15 million addicts, causing up to 100,000 deaths per year, spreading HIV at an unprecedented rate and, not least, funding criminal groups, insurgents and terrorists.

Introducing the report, UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa said "we have identified the global consequences of the Afghan opium trade. Some are dire but expected; others seem illogical, yet are shocking."

The report brings to light and analyses anomalies such as the high volumes of heroin flows vs. low volumes of seizures, the decline in interdiction rates vs. rising drug values. It also points at the fact that Taliban are making more money from drugs now than when they were in power, and that the number of drug-related deaths in consuming countries is larger than the number of soldiers killed in Afghanistan's poppy fields.

Anomalous, yet broadly known, is also the fact that much more opium is being produced in Afghanistan than is consumed in the world at-large, with some of the statistics on the drug flows and consumption not adding up, as shows the report.

If you would like to learn more about these and other facts and analysis presented in *Addiction, Crime and Insurgency*, please see the Executive Summary and the full report at <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/addiction-crime-and-insurgency.html>

Background:



*Addiction, Crime and Insurgency* enhances the existing evidence base for the Rainbow Strategy and its seven action plans that are geared towards various aspects of the drug problem such as border control, precursors, drug demand and HIV/AIDS, financial flows and money laundering. It also validates the acute relevance of a **regional approach** in tackling the problem of Afghan drugs as per the recommendations of the Paris Pact policy meetings.

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## **PARIS PACT / RAINBOW STRATEGY CIRCULAR – NOVEMBER 2009**

In late October 2009 the Third Ministerial Meeting under the Triangular Initiative (TI) brought together in Vienna senior officials from Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan, reviewing the previous year's activities and planning for the coming year. As briefed earlier, 2009 had started successfully with the Joint Planning Cell (JPC) opening its doors in February 2009 followed by the first-ever joint operation against drug trafficking networks on 8 March 2009. Two more operations were to follow during the year, carried out by counter-narcotics and police forces of Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, resulting in hundreds kg of narcotics seized and many arrests made.

However, it was appreciated during the meeting that the potential of the Triangular Initiative has only been touched so far and that more lies within reach. Future activities include transforming the intelligence-incubator JPC to the next stage by posting permanent liaison officers from the three countries at the centre, linking the JPC with the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC), having the centre involved in precursor chemical control through Operation Tarcet, and facilitate joint activities between the three countries, including joint patrols and regular area-targeted operations.

Finally, and in order to sustain these policy and operational achievements, the Triangular Initiative would require a financial boost from national and international donors in the near future, for which the ministers of the three countries made an appeal. A number of prospective international donors have been briefed on the effective value and results of the Triangular Initiative, as well as on its action plan and objectives for 2010.

### Background:



The UNODC-brokered Triangular Initiative was launched in June 2007 to strengthen cooperation among Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan in the field of counter narcotics enforcement through a series of confidence-building measures and operational activity. The Triangular Initiative is one of the seven plans comprising the Rainbow Strategy. UNODC serves as the Secretariat to the Triangular Initiative, facilitating the delivery of technical assistance and mobilizing financial support for it.

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