

UNODC in South Eastern Europe

NEWSLETTER | Vol. 32

This newsletter provides information about key news and events related to UNODC's action and partnerships in the region. The UNODC Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe (2016-2019) is structured along three main pillars: (I) Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime, (II) Enhancement of Integrity and Justice, (III) Prevention, Treatment and Care. The Programme focuses on priority actions identified in cooperation with the Governments in the region and through a dialogue with national, regional and international partners. For feedback, queries or comments regarding this newsletter, please contact Ms. Ekaterina Kolykhalova (e-mail: ekaterina.kolykhalova@un.org) and Ms. Lejla Karahasanovic (lejla.karahasanovic@un.org).



NEWS AND EVENTS

UNODC launches Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe 2020-2023

29 November 2019, Vienna, Austria: The UNODC Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe (2020-2023) was launched at the 10th meeting of the Programme's Steering Committee. The *Regional Programme (RP SEE)* was developed with the Governments of the region to ensure national ownership and maximum impact. It aims to deliver outcomes through targeted, integrated work in three sub-programmes: (i) Support to law enforcement, enhanced border security and related topics; (ii) Strengthening the fight against organized crime and countering illicit financial flows; (iii) Drug use prevention and treatment of drug use disorders, and a cross-cutting pillar (iv) on strengthening research capacity, policy and monitoring, with respect for human rights and a gender perspective, as well as cooperation with civil society, and other emerging thematic areas. *RP SEE* aims to meet the specific national needs of the countries in the region, articulated in an inclusive, participatory process, while also ensuring that national activities are part of a coordinated, harmonized regional and inter-regional approach in line with UNODC global principles and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The launch event was complemented by the presentation of the outcome of a new UNODC regional report produced under the

EU-funded regional UNODC project "Measuring and assessing organized crime in the Western Balkans (MACRO)". The report describes the trends and patterns observed through collected data and proposes evidence-based policy advice to support developments in the rule of law, implementation of the SDG 16.4 and further the EU accession process in the region. The event was attended by the members of



the Steering Committee, Ambassadors and senior representatives from the countries of the region, partner countries and the donor community. Among the senior EU representatives were officials of the DG NEAR, EUROPOL, FRONTEX and EMCDDA. Regional and international organizations attending the event included INTERPOL, OSCE and PCC SEE among others. The UN Resident Coordinator in Serbia and the Head of the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Montenegro also attended the event. The broad representation of these and other partners al-

lowed for the strategic exchange of views in the context of the new *RP SEE* and the outlook for the future.

UNODC participates in the 19th Meeting of the PCC SEE Committee of Ministers

7 November 2019, Vienna, Austria: The Police Cooperation Convention for Southeast Europe (PCC SEE) Secretariat held its 19th meeting of its Committee of Ministers, under the auspices of the Chairmanship-in-Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina. UNODC highlighted the excellent cooperation with PCC SEE Secretariat, in line with the signed Memorandum of Understanding (April 2019), which aims to support the joint work in the field of combating transnational organized crime through exchange of information and expertise, as well as implementation of joint activities. Furthermore, UNODC reiterated it will continue its strong partnership with the PCC SEE Secretariat in actively supporting SEE, particularly in the framework of *the RP SEE*. (For info on all above: Ekaterina Kolykhalova)



ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING/COUNTER-FINANCING OF TERRORISM

UNODC continues to support South Eastern Europe in the field of financial investigations

The UNODC project on Financial Investigations in SEE, funded by the European Commission, is delivering activities to build regional anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) capacity. This joint two-year UNODC/CEPOL project is designed to strengthen the capacities of the law enforcement sector and the judiciary in the six Western Balkan jurisdictions to effectively detect, investigate, prosecute and recover the proceeds of crime.

On **12-13 December 2019** in **Lisbon, Portugal**, UNODC, in cooperation with the Policia Judiciaria, the national criminal investigation police agency of Portugal,



organized a study visit for senior officials representing the law enforcement and judicial institutions of Montenegro. The study visit aimed at sharing the best practices and reinforcing cooperation on countering serious and organized crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, cyber and financial crime, and money laundering. During the visit, the participants gained practical experience from the Prosecution and the Central Criminal Investigation Court of Portugal on prosecution and adjudication of complex cases of serious and organized crime, money laundering, anti-corruption, and financing of terrorism. In addition, the delegation acquired the best practices from the experts of the Policia Judiciaria on conducting parallel financial investigations into organized crime and drug trafficking cases, on assets freezing and confiscation of the proceeds of crime, virtual currencies and payment methods linked to these crimes, as well as the importance of the national and international cooperation in these areas. Additionally, the study visit provided the

opportunity for the delegation to visit the facilities of the Policia Judiciaria, including its tactical training centre, situation room, helipad and the forensic lab.

On **17 December 2019** in **Vienna, Austria**, UNODC in cooperation with CEPOL organized the regional conference of the UNODC certified national trainers on financial investigations and CEPOL's national focal points from the six Western Balkan jurisdictions. The conference is an integral part of the comprehensive UNODC Train-the-Trainer course on financial investigations, which brought together over 75 experts from the law enforcement and judicial institutions of the six Western Balkan jurisdictions. The event provided an opportunity for UNODC and CEPOL to report on the 2018-2019 project results to the beneficiaries. It also supported exchange of best practices and sharing experience and lessons learned on financial investigations amongst the experts from the law enforcement and judicial institutions. The conference served as a platform for the reinforcement of regional cooperation on addressing such transnational threats as money laundering, organized crime, the financing of terrorism and drug trafficking. The delegations expressed appreciation for the mentorship and training activities delivered by UNODC and CEPOL in the framework of this project and reconfirmed the strong commitment of their authorities on the further implementation of the planned project activities, which will finish on 31 March 2020.



UNODC and Russia review opportunities for further cooperation

16 December 2019, Moscow, Russia: In the spirit of inter-regional cooperation, the *UNODC Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe (RP SEE)* cooperates with the Federal Financial Monitoring Service of the Russian Federation (Rosfinmonitoring) in supporting the law enforcement and other

authorities in SEE in the field of anti-money laundering and countering financing of terrorism and related areas. In this context, RP SEE held consultations with the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior and the Rosfinmonitoring to review the ongoing cooperation and the future engagement in the period 2020-2023, which corresponds to the new cycle of *the RP SEE*. The parties confirmed the mutual usefulness of this collaboration and discussed possible new areas of work in the future. An important element of UNODC work in SEE is complementarity towards operational and practical results, whereas the agenda of the new training courses at the Training Centre of Rosfinmonitoring will be formulated for 2020 and beyond.

UNODC reinforces the capacity of Albania in effective risk-based anti-money laundering supervision

12-13 December, Tirana, Albania: UNODC organized a technical workshop for the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), the Financial Supervisory Authority and the Bank of Albania, as well as compliance officers of the currency exchange offices in the country. The workshop was dedicated to the effective risk-based supervision of the exchange offices and designated non-financial businesses and professions. The workshop aimed at sharing the best international practices and conducting simulation exercises on the detection of the money-laundering and terrorist financing schemes in the exchange offices and money transfer systems. UNODC provided a detailed overview of AML/CFT obligations of the compliance officers and the role of the Bank of Albania and the General Directorate for the Prevention of Money Laundering (GDPML) as Albania's FIU in licensing, risk management, on-site and off-site inspections, and the risk-based supervision of the exchange offices. The workshop concluded with the moderated discussions on practical solutions and lessons learned in this area in light of the ongoing 5th round of the mutual evaluation of Albania by MONEYVAL. The workshop is part of the ongoing UNODC project on "Capacity Building of Albania in the AML/CFT area", funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). *(For info on all above: Yulia Minaeva)*

FIREARMS CONTROL

UNODC continues active partnership with the Roadmap for countering firearms trafficking in the Western Balkans

UNODC continues to cooperate within and with the "Roadmap for a sustainable Solution to the Illegal Possession, Misuse and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their Ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024" (Roadmap), including with the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC).

16 December 2019, Vienna, Austria: UNODC in cooperation with EMPACT (EU 4-year policy cycle to fight serious and organized crime) Firearms organized a workshop on the implementation of the *Roadmap's* Key Performance Indicator (KPI) 5 to discuss the reduction of illicit flows of firearms, ammunition and explosives (FAE) across the Western Balkans.

UNODC placed the monitoring of the *Roadmap* in the general context of UNODC's Global Data Collection Initiative and demonstrated how the EU member states could collect and report data under KPI 5, using UNODC's Illicit Arms Flows Questionnaire (IAFQ). The discussions among the experts helped to identify the challenges in collecting and reporting seizure data, share national



practices and commitments to provide the information required under KPI 5. The participants concluded that the IAFQ can be an important tool to collect and report data under KPI 5.

20-21 November 2019, Tirana, Albania: UNODC participated in the 2nd Regional Coordination Meeting on the implementation of the *Roadmap*. The participants, including UNODC, reviewed the progress in the implementation of the *Roadmap* over January-June 2019, shared plans for the next period, identified key challenges, coordinated their work within the specific goals of the *Roadmap*, presented baseline data as collected by the authorities on the *Roadmap's* KPIs, discussed contributions from the interna-

tional organizations, and reviewed donor support for the initiative.

29 October, Skopje, North Macedonia; 1 November, Tirana, Albania; 4 November 2019, Podgorica, Montenegro; 7 November, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina; 9 November 2019, Belgrade, Serbia: UNODC participated in the 2nd series of National Co-



ordination Meetings on the implementation of the *Roadmap*. Some of the details of the relevant UNODC work are presented in the separate stories below.

14 October 2019, Istanbul, Turkey: UNODC participated in the 2nd meeting of the Steering Committee of the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) for the implementation of the *Roadmap*. The Trust Fund was created to support the Western Balkan jurisdictions in their fight against misuse, illegal possession and illicit trafficking of firearms and ammunition. The Steering Committee includes representatives from UNDP, UNODC and interested donor countries. UNODC submitted for consideration of the Steering Committee a regional project that focuses on strengthening the criminal justice responses along the entire penal chain, from detection, to investigation prosecution and adjudication, and to enhance firearms and crime data collection, analysis and operational use in investigations.

UNODC supports Montenegro in countering firearms trafficking

12-14 November 2019, Podgorica, Montenegro: UNODC organized a training for frontline officers on detection of firearms trafficking in postal shipments and at land border crossing points. The event was conducted in cooperation with the Customs Administration, the Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Economy of Montenegro for selected representatives of investigation and analytical units of the Customs Administration. The training focused on risk assessment, developing local risk indicators, as well as profiling and selection of suspicious

packages for examination. It included practical exercises for enhancing skills to identify concealments through various methods including X-ray analysis. The participants gained knowledge on the procedures for import, transit and export of firearms, their parts and components, and ammunition. The training addressed also the criminal aspects of firearms trafficking, including the procedures to be followed upon detection of illicit firearms.

On 10-11 December 2019, Podgorica, Montenegro: Building up on the November training, UNODC supported the Customs Administration in analyzing and mapping the processes of border control related to postal and express parcels shipments, and the use of these methods to traffic firearms, their parts and explosives. UNODC conducted several expert group meetings with the Customs staff from the Postal Office, Podgorica Airport and the Risk Analysis section, focusing on the methods used to detect firearms and the challenges that exist. The UNODC work on detection of firearms in postal shipments is supported by the contribution of the Government of Germany and addresses the increasing use of postal and express parcels to traffic illegal firearms, their parts and components, and ammunition.

Furthermore, on **10 December 2019**, UNODC and the Ministry of Justice of Montenegro co-organized an expert group meeting to review the report reflecting the *UNODC legislative analysis for harmonization of the criminal law and criminal procedure law with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC)* and its Firearms Protocol. UNODC presented the main findings of the report and highlighted the differences between the provisions of the national criminal legislation with international instruments. The experts analyzed Article 5 of the UN Firearms Protocol on Criminalization and the relevant provisions from the Montenegrin Criminal Code. Based on the findings of the UNODC report, experts recommended including the subject of firearms as a topic for consideration by the Working Group for amendments of the Criminal Procedure Code and the Criminal Code in Montenegro.

UNODC holds a firearms control related review of the Criminal Code of North Macedonia

2 December 2019, Skopje, North Macedonia: UNODC presented the findings and recommendations of the legislative review on

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harmonizing the national legislation with the UNTOC and the UN Firearms Protocol to the Working Group tasked with review and proposing amendments to the Criminal Code of North Macedonia. The meeting focused on discussing the offences on firearms trafficking; illicit firearms manufacturing; falsifying or illicitly obliterating, removing or altering the markings on firearms, and the special investigative measures under the Criminal Procedure Code. The Working Group took note of the recommendations for harmonization with the UN Firearms Protocol and decided to include in its agenda the review of the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code.

UNODC supports investigation and prosecution of illicit firearms cases at regional level

26-28 November 2019, Belgrade, Serbia: UNODC in cooperation with the Governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia organized a training on illicit arms trade for 44 officers from these countries to enhance the knowledge on conduct-

ing investigations on and prosecution of illicit trade in firearms, to identify challenges in the existing criminal laws and criminal procedure laws, and to share good practices and lessons learned. The workshop had three parts: legal framework and procedures for arms trade, prosecution of illicit arms trade and case studies. The participants applied the gained knowledge in specific scenarios for investigations on illicit arms transfers and identified challenges and solutions under the legislations in the three counties.

UNODC and Bosnia and Herzegovina hold a workshop on recording firearms relevant information

29-30 October 2019, Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina: UNODC together with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) of Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina, organized a workshop on recording relevant information on firearms, in the framework of UNODC's Monitoring Illicit Arms Flows Initiative. The overall objective of the workshop was to

support the Working Group on Weapons, which was recently formed within the MoI of Republika Srpska, in improving firearms data collection and recording practices and tools. The workshop further aimed at explaining the UNODC's IAFQ with a view to facilitating reporting by the Republika Srpska under this global data collection exercise. The workshop allowed the Working Group to identify important points for continued discussions, including how a database on seized firearms, components and ammunition should be set up; which of the structures within the MoI should have access and authors' rights and responsibilities; how to align the scope of the database interface with Standard Operating Procedures that are currently being developed; and how to collect and share the data requested under the IAFQ. The workshop benefitted from expert contributions of the Public Security Police of Portugal and was financially supported by the Republika Srpska and the EU. *(For info on all of the above: Diman Dimov)*

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

UNODC joins international efforts in combating trafficking in persons (TiP)

28 November 2019, Podgorica, Montenegro: In line with the global efforts NATO is reviewing its *Policy on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2004)*, which reiterates that TiP is a serious abuse of human rights, especially affecting women and girls, and fuels corruption and organized crime. In this context, a regional conference was organized by NATO and the Government of Montenegro, which continues to face this threat as a country of origin, transit and destination, considering the recent increase in the number of potential victims identified as being at risk. The conference was aimed at fostering exchange of best practices and lessons learned on combatting TiP among the governments of the region, international organizations, including EU and OSCE, and civil society. UNODC contributed with an overview on the role of international organizations in combating TiP, in particular the work of UNODC in the area to seek synergies between all relevant stakeholders. The findings of the conference will serve as a baseline for the revision of the NATO Policy on Combatting TiP as well as to provide a useful foundation for the member states to address this global issue.

UNODC boosts cooperation in SEE in addressing smuggling of migrants (SoM) and TiP

30 October 2019, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina: UNODC in cooperation with the Governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina and France organized a regional seminar on strengthening cross-border cooperation in investigation and prosecution of SoM and TiP in SEE aimed at enhancing cooperation by sharing experiences in trends, challenges and good practices in addressing criminal networks involved in these crimes in France as well as along the migration routes in SEE. The relevant authorities addressing these threats in SEE and France attended the seminar, which further contributed to strengthening the established connections between the relevant actors and boosted cooperation and information sharing for a



more effective and efficient response and improved synergy in countering SoM and TiP.

UNODC further supports Bosnia and Herzegovina in countering TiP

15-17 October 2019, Vlačić, Bosnia and Herzegovina: UNODC delivered the second multidisciplinary training address TiP in



Bosnia and Herzegovina in cooperation with the host country and the US Government. The agenda included sessions on identifying and investigating TiP for the purpose of forced labour, including causes, risk factors/victims' vulnerability, methods of prevention and role of private sector, victim's rights and compensation possibilities and indictment preparation and conduction of a mock trial. The training ended with a debrief amongst experts to boost exchange and give recommendations to further refine the acquired knowledge and experience in countering TiP for the purpose of forced labour. *(For info on all above: Davor Raus)*

ORGANIZED CRIME

UNODC assesses the causes of recidivism in Albania

9-13 December 2019, Tirana/Fier/Peqin, Albania: Albania was the first country to participate in the UNODC pilot rapid assessment of the causes of recidivism. UNODC met with the senior management of prisons in Tirana, before conducting a series of 13 focus group interviews with repeat offenders in three prisons: Ali Demi Women's Prison in Tirana, Fier Prison, and Peqin Maximum Security Prison. These interviews were followed by a written questionnaire capturing the reasons why the recidivists themselves believed they had returned to prison. The results of this research will be used to refine the approach used in subsequent national studies, including in other countries. These national findings and a comparative review of the three countries will be presented at the Kyoto Crime Congress in April 2020. Discussion of additional national studies is underway. This work represents the first research conducted by UNODC on criminal

justice matters and could become the basis for a global study on prisons. *(For info: Theodore Leggett)*

UNODC meets with the national authorities and partners in Serbia

5-6 December 2019, Belgrade, Serbia: Following the launch of the *Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe (2020-2023)*, UNODC met with the relevant stakeholders in Serbia to discuss the upcoming UNODC border control and counter-trafficking activities and introduce the UNODC Regional Serious and Organized Crime Advisor. The consultations further build upon the UNODC efforts to support the region in countering drugs and crime and are part of the preparation to the launch of the new border control initiative as of 2020.

UNODC participates in the regional dialogue on security in the Western Balkans and holds talks with EUROPOL

15 November 2019, The Hague, The Netherlands: Following a series of informal coordination meetings in Sarajevo, Budapest and Vienna with various initiatives to fight cross-border organized crime in SEE conducted under the Instrument for the Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), UNODC participated in an informal coordination meeting under the IPA Regional Program Western Balkans at the Center for International Legal Cooperation (CILC) Headquarters. Regional and international organizations, including CEPOL, EUROPOL, PCC SEE Secretariat, the Western Balkans Integrative Internal Security Governance (IISG) Secretariat and UNODC attended the event to discuss the advancement of the respective initiatives and planned activities in the remaining cycle of the IPA 2017. UNODC also met with counterparts from EUROPOL to discuss future cooperation in the areas of border control and illicit trafficking in SEE. *(For info on this and above: Ekaterina Kolykhalova and Bill Wood)*

ANTI-CORRUPTION

UNODC co-hosts event on collective action initiatives against corruption in SEE

18 December 2019, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates: In the midst of the eighth session of the Conference of the State Parties (CoSP8) to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), UNODC in partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) held a special event to present ideas and best practices in collective action initiatives for the implementation of UNCAC in SEE. The event reiterated a strong commitment to the Belgrade Outcome Statement that lays out con-

crete and practical steps towards cooperation on anti-corruption. The panel was moderated by a representative from the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption of North Macedonia, who stressed the valuable contributions of NGOs and the private sector to the second review cycle of UNCAC implementation in the country. UNODC, through three multi-stakeholder workshops in SEE, trained over 70 NGOs, 40 private sector entities and governments on the Convention. The Secretary General of the International Chamber of Commerce of Albania observed how useful these workshops have been in

identifying local and regional partners and how they contributed to the birth of fruitful initiatives such as the Week of Integrity: the Conference on Integrity and Anti-corruption, scheduled to take place in Albania in early 2020. The workshops have been instrumental in fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration, and so is the eighth session of the COSP, attended by over one hundred NGOs. In January 2020, UNODC and EBRD will sign a MoU to institutionalize partnership on good governance and recognize joint commitment towards collective action in preventing corruption. *(For info: Viktorija Nesterovajte)*

TERRORISM PREVENTION

UNODC supports SEE in addressing the foreign terrorist fighters' (FTF) threat

16-18 December 2019, Vienna, Austria: UNODC held a regional event on FTFs, where it launched *the updated Manual for Judicial Training Institutes, aimed at supporting SEE in effectively addressing the FTF phenomenon*. The Manual is translated into the languages of the region. The event focused on the exchange of experiences in addressing the return of FTFs and their families, as well as the prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies, and curricula development for the judicial/police training institutes

based on *the Manual*. 24 investigators, prosecutors and representatives of the judicial/police training institutions and criminal justice authorities from SEE actively participated in the session supported by six international experts in addition to UNODC.

UNODC shares expertise on terrorism prevention in SEE

19-21 November 2019, Skopje, North Macedonia: UNODC participated in the Regional Expert Workshop on the Protection of Critical Infrastructure (CI) against Terrorist Attacks organized by OSCE in partnership with

INTERPOL, UN Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and with the expert assistance of the OSCE participating States, as well as regional and international organizations. To further strengthen awareness, knowledge and capabilities of member states on measures addressing terrorist threats against critical infrastructure, OSCE promotes the 2018 UN Compendium of Good Practices, developed in the framework of the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Working Group on Emerging Threats and CI Protection (WG), which provides

TERRORISM PREVENTION

reference materials and guidance on the development and strengthening of risk-reduction strategies, focusing on, inter alia, prevention, preparedness, mitigation, investigation, response and recovery. The Compendium was presented to the participants along with discussions around the international legal framework to protect vulnerable targets; understanding the challenge of the terrorist threat to CI; sharing experience through developing national strategies for reducing risks to CI and building respective national frameworks. UNODC provided an overview of its current terrorism prevention initiatives in the region further contributing to a comprehensive global response to terrorist threats.

UNODC contributes to the regional dialogue on addressing FTFs

12-13 November 2019, Belgrade, Serbia: UNODC took part in the training on addressing the FTF threat organized by the OSCE Secretariat and OSCE-Serbia. The training was delivered to personnel from various units of the Serbian Border Police responsible for all frontline border management including detection of FTFs. The reviewed topics included FTF history and background; current cases, trends and challenges in document security; available Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Records (PNR) and Interpol databases; legal frameworks; security features of travel documents; risk analysis model applied to FTFs; interview techniques; case studies and practical exercises. The participants were exposed to real-life situations in detecting and apprehending FTFs, which contributes to strengthening the capacities of SEE in effectively addressing the FTF phenomenon. UNODC contributed by highlighting its initiatives and announcing enhanced

presence in the region plus plans to collaboratively work with OSCE across the security and serious and organized crime field.

11-13 November 2019, Rakitje, Croatia: The return home of FTFs is a matter of growing concern in SEE requiring a concerted approach and an effective response among member states and regional stakeholders. With this in mind, RACVIAC – the Centre for Security Cooperation organized a workshop on "Developing strategies on Rehabilitation and Reintegration of FTFs" in cooperation with OSCE-Bosnia and Herzegovina and the RCC. The discussions focused, among other topics, on the possibilities to develop a national programme addressing the challenges related to the rehabilitation and reintegration process of FTFs and their families, to establish appropriate policies and action plans on their social reintegration and ensure an enabling institutional environment for the rehabilitation of FTFs by implementing fundamental reform measures in prison management and prisoner treatment. UNODC presented *its Manual*.

UNODC provides support in the context of Persons allegedly associated with terrorist groups

22-23 October 2019, Vienna, Austria: A large number of people associated with terrorist groups are incarcerated or in camps for internally displaced persons, some of them, including from SEE, have gone back or are returning to their countries of origin or relocating to other countries. Member states have adopted different approaches to deal with these challenges. In many cases, these efforts resulted in progress and included summary trials of individuals associated with terrorist groups; placing persons suspected of association with terrorist groups in protected administrative detention; develop-

ing rehabilitation programmes focused on de-radicalization; as well as allowing persons who voluntarily disengage from terrorist groups to return to their communities without having been subjected to the criminal justice process. Addressing these complex challenges requires the development and implementation of comprehensive strategies for the *prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of persons associated with terrorist groups for the Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Persons Allegedly Associated with Terrorist Groups ("PRR strategies")*. Against this backdrop, UNODC organized a major Expert Group Meeting on this topic to discuss with governments, academia, NGOs and international partners, including from SEE, existing practice and challenges relevant to the requirement for comprehensive and tailored *PRR strategies* and to support UNODC and CTED in compiling information on existing practice and relevant standards in this field. The information gathered at the EGM will feed into a *PRR* working paper produced by UNODC and CTED in 2020. (For info on all above: *Dolgor Solongo*)



DRUG PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND CARE

UNODC participates in the regional meeting on the emergence of new psychoactive substances (NPS) in SEE

26-27 November 2019, Podgorica, Montenegro: UNODC took part in the regional meeting on the Emergence of NPS, as a Global Challenge and Threat to the Safety and Health of Societies organized by OSCE-Montenegro, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health of Montenegro. The meeting brought together representatives of relevant state institutions (ministries of

health and law enforcement agencies) and NGOs from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Slovenia, as well as experts from the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), OSCE and UNODC. The event is in line with supporting Montenegro's efforts in creating a multisector approach to combatting the NPS threat. UNODC contributed to the meeting by presenting an overview of the Early Warning Advisory on NPS including the international

regulatory framework on illicit drugs along with the scheduling mechanism related to the relevant International Conventions.

UNODC supports the national professionals and academic experts in the treatment of substance use disorders

18-22 November 2019 Belgrade, Serbia: UNODC co-organized, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health of Serbia, the first Universal Treatment Curriculum (UTC) "walkthrough" training for the national

DRUG PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND CARE

professionals. The training was technically supported by the University of California San Diego and funded by the Drug Advisory Programme (DAP) of the Colombo Plan-Chilean Office and is comprised of two five-day



training workshops. UTC is an internationally certified training package, providing training materials for knowledge and skill development of treatment professionals. The aim of the training is to reduce the significant health, social and economic problems associated with substance use disorders by building international treatment capacity through training, and so expanding the professional global treatment workforce. The training in Belgrade was facilitated by four local certified UTC trainers and covered the following topics: psychology and pharmacology for addiction professionals; treatment of substance use disorders and continuum of care; common co-occurring mental and medical disorders and basic counseling skills. In total, 26 professionals and academic experts from four regional university centers in Serbia (Nis, Kragujevac, Belgrade, Novi Sad) and the Military Medical Academy attended the training. This knowledge will be disseminated by the trained professionals to their peers in line with the priorities of the Ministry of Health. The next trainings will be organized in the first quarter of 2020 in Albania and Serbia.

UNODC participated in the first Regional Forum on Drug Addiction and Recovery in the Balkan region

19-20 November, Belgrade, Serbia: UNODC took part in the first regional forum on drug addiction and recovery organized in view of the partnership between the World Federation Against Drugs and NGOs from the Balkan region. Over 170 national professionals and NGO members attended the event to discuss the recovery services and other possibilities to address substance use disorders, where international experts particularly outlined medically assisted treatment and drug policies. UNODC showcased the importance of evidence-based drug use prevention by discussing the family-based programmes and their results in SEE,



the UNODC-WHO International Standards on Treatment of Drug Use Disorders and the global and regional substance use trends.

UNODC completes the second round of follow-up sessions of Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence programme in SEE

4 November, Skopje, North Macedonia; 11 November, Budva, Montenegro; 15 November, Belgrade, Serbia: In the framework of the Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence (LQSFA) programme conducted by UNODC in partnership with the Lions Quest Foundation, three follow-up sessions were organized with elementary school teachers to assess the current implementation of the programme and address potential challenges and gaps that could result in the process. The

follow-up sessions not only provided an opportunity to collect data and make assessments but also to discuss issues linked to the social emotional learning considered as important by young adolescents, including the influence of social media and its potentially negative effects on the user. Upon conclusion of the current piloting cycle and the related assessment, a comparative analysis will be made to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme based on either a one-year or two-year cycles and provide relevant recommendations accordingly for the further implementation of the programme.

UNODC supports the policymakers of North Macedonia in drug use prevention and treatment

5 November 2019, Skopje, North Macedonia: UNODC in cooperation with the Ministry of Health of North Macedonia organized a follow up meeting on last year's workshop for policymakers on the nature of drug use prevention and treatment of substance use disorders in North Macedonia. The comprehensive inter-ministerial workplan developed by the policymakers and aimed at improving national drug demand reduction policies and promoting and supporting effective strategies was further reviewed and adapted to the current national context at the event attended by representatives from the Ministries of Health, Justice and Interior, drug dependence treatment facilities, prison facilities and NGOs. The participants provided an assessment of last year's workshop by completing a follow-up questionnaire, where 91.7% of the participants stated that their attitudes and knowledge was changed as a result of the workshop and 83,3 % said that they are currently using the acquired knowledge in their daily work, which attests of the added value of such initiatives. *(For info on all of the above: Milos Stojanovic)*

GLOBAL CONTAINER CONTROL PROGRAMME (CCP)

Durres Port Control Unit Officers visit Port of Vlora

16-17 December 2019, Vlora, Albania: Supported by the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP), the officers of the Port Control Unit (PCU) at the Durres Port accompanied by the senior officials of the Albanian Customs Administration and UNODC paid a visit to the Vlora Port. The

visit was aimed to share good experiences and practices of the CCP with the authorities of the Vlora Port and assess the possibility of making the Vlora Port a part of the Programme. The Port of Vlora in the south-west of Albania is the second largest in the country and though it is not a container port, it occupies an important location for counter-ing cross-border crime and contraband in-

cluding in view of its proximity to Italy and the increased trade with other ports in the region. During the visit the officials met with the Head of Vlora Customs, the Regional Director of Border Police and Migration Directorate and the Chief of the Port Commissariat. The counterparts provided overviews of the respective entities, volume of trade, typology of cross-border crime and inter-

GLOBAL CONTAINER CONTROL PROGRAMME (CCP)

agency cooperation. A number of important observations were made and some opportunities were identified, including a proposal



for a new and specialized assistance to the Vloresha Port. (For info: Ela Banaj)

UNODC-WCO CCP continues to support operational cooperation of customs administrations of Bosnia and Herzegovina

3 December 2019, Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina: Supported by CCP, the Indirect Taxation Authority of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ITA) and the Customs Administration of Serbia conducted several bilateral meetings and, subsequently, implemented a joint operation in November 2019 aimed at identifying, profiling and inspecting risky container shipments, including monitoring the movement of containers and other shipments from Serbia to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and vice versa. The joint operation facilitated the exchange of information between the PCU and other ITA structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Serbian Customs. During the operation, the two customs administrations exchanged a total of 32 sets of information on the movement of containers and other shipments between the two countries. The implementation of this joint activity was supported by the Government of Luxembourg.

28-29 November 2019, land-border crossing point Bijača, Bosnia and Herzegovina:

The CCP conducted a regular mentoring visit to the PCU in Bosnia and Herzegovina, aimed at assessing the status of findings following the previous mentoring visits, discussing a range of issues with the PCU staff relevant to the Programme implementation, and identifying and addressing challenges for facilitation of the implementation of planned activities. During 2019, a number of such mentoring visits to the PCU at the land-border of Bijača were conducted generating reports which provide an opportunity for the CCP to assess the efforts of the implementing partners in Bosnia and Herzegovina

related to achieving programmatic objectives and fulfilling the annual workplans.

September-October 2019, Port of Rijeka, Croatia; land-border crossing point Bijača, Bosnia and Herzegovina:

The ITA and the Customs Administration of Croatia conducted joint activities related to the control of container shipments from the Port of Rijeka to Bosnia and Herzegovina. These activities were aimed at identifying, profiling and inspecting risky container shipments in order to prevent smuggling of goods and to detect and sanction other forms of cross-border crime. During the operation, the Bosnian PCU and other ITA structures, together with the Croatian Customs recorded significant results by seizing a large quantity of undeclared goods, particularly goods violating the intellectual property rights. ITA recorded irregularities and subsequently seized over 1,000 items of various goods that were not reported to customs when imported into the customs territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the postoperative phase, irregularities were identified as a result of the previous exchange of information on suspected recipient companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, resulting in the seizure of 10,000 pieces of toys, that are protected intellectual property rights in the EU. The total estimated value of the goods seized by the Croatian counterparts is over 250,000 Euro. The two customs administrations ex-



changed a total of 42 pieces of information on the movement of container and other shipments from and to the Port of Rijeka, and additionally two pieces of information on the movement of consignments from the Port of Ploče towards the customs territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following the implementation of these joint activities, in mid-October officers of the PCU of Bosnia and Herzegovina together with other ITA colleagues visited the Port of Rijeka where participants had an opportunity to discuss all relevant issues with colleagues from the Port of Rijeka Risk Analysis Center. Addition-

ally, the guests from Bosnia and Herzegovina met with the port authorities and representatives of the container terminal concessioner International Container Terminal Services (ICTSI). The implementation of this joint activity was supported by the Government of Germany.

29-31 October 2019, Tbilisi, Georgia: CCA organized an exchange visit for the PCUs from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Georgia. This unique opportunity involved officials from the ITA and the Border Police of Bosnia and Herzegovina who familiarized themselves with the work of the PCUs in Georgia, established in the framework of CCP as well as with the procedures and practices regu-



larly performed by the PCUs in Georgia composed of officers from six different law enforcement agencies. The hosts underlined excellent levels of cooperation with other agencies and shared access to available databases and analytical tools of the different law enforcement entities. The participants expressed particular interest in information tracking systems being used by the Georgian Customs and also praised the common approach of the Georgian agencies to share access to information and support mutual efforts to fight organized crime, the smuggling of goods and other illegal cross-border activities.

Furthermore, the officers from Bosnia and Herzegovina visited the ACCU at Tbilisi International Airport and were briefed on the challenges occurring in its daily work and the significant seizures since 2017, and learned about specific modus operandi in air cargo traffic. Finally, the visit was extended to the Georgia-Azerbaijan land-border crossing "Red bridge" to familiarize the participants with the challenges and threats encountered in the daily work of customs and other law enforcement officers. (For info on all of the above: Alen Gagula)