



# Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

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## Working Group of Government Experts on Technical Assistance

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**Establishing capacity-building programmes for  
prosecutors and members of the judiciary and law  
enforcement agencies, including to enhance inter-agency  
cooperation and coordination**

## **Establishing capacity-building programmes for prosecutors and members of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies**

**Discussion paper by the Secretariat**

### **I. Introduction**

1. In its resolution 6/1, entitled “Ensuring effective implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto” the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), inter alia, to continue providing technical assistance in order to support and complement national, regional and thematic programmes and activities based on the needs and priorities of Member States in combating transnational organized crime.

2. In article 27 of the Organized Crime Convention, law enforcement cooperation to combat organized crime is promoted, while the benefits of international cooperation and the sharing of information and expertise between Member States are emphasized.

3. The present paper examines some of the issues and challenges relating to inter-agency, regional and interregional cooperation in combating organized crime viewed through the prism of the experience gained by UNODC in the course of the implementation of several technical assistance, thematic, as well as global

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\* CTOC/COP/WG.2/2013/1.



programmes, such as the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism and the Global Firearms Programme.

## **II. Issues for discussion**

4. The Working Group may wish to consider the challenges to inter-agency and interregional cooperation between customs and law enforcement agencies, financial intelligence units and prosecutors who have the responsibility to prevent, investigate and prosecute the activities of organized criminal groups. In particular, the Working Group may wish to consider the following issues as a basis for its deliberations:

- How does a general lack of understanding of the importance of linkages in operational cooperation between the rule of law sectors contribute to a failure to meet the challenges of organized crime?
- How can the international community (States, the United Nations or other organizations) better address the limitations at national levels in addressing the growing challenges of organized crime?
- How can resistance at senior levels within law enforcement agencies to examine existing practices, agency partnerships and responses to combat organized crime be addressed in technical cooperation projects?
- What can be done to minimize inter-agency struggles for power and competition for Government resources?
- What kind of measures or initiatives have proven or could prove to be successful in building confidence and trust between national agencies or between agencies of different countries?
- Is there a need for workable guidelines to support information-sharing between agencies facing common organized crime threats?
- How can States improve linkages between front-line law enforcement and prosecution services in order to address shortfalls in evidence-gathering in complex organized crime investigations?
- What are the challenges faced by States in using special investigative techniques and what legal and technical assistance could UNODC provide to support their effective use?
- What more could UNODC do to facilitate the central authorities and prosecutors to become financially and politically sustainable?
- How can UNODC better strengthen its technical assistance programmes for prosecutorial and law enforcement authorities, dealing with different forms of organized crime?

## **III. Inter-agency cooperation**

5. Inter-agency cooperation is the cornerstone of a holistic and effective government response to organized crime. Governments invest heavily in crafting sound legislation, building the operational, professional and technical capacity of

their rule of law structures to enforce their legislation, but in many instances fail to ensure that the outputs destined for the community good are harmonized to deliver as expected. The result is often duplication of agency effort and inter-agency rivalry that places competition for turf and Government resources ahead of serving the community; fragmented and ineffective responses to organized crime and lack of communication between the key actors in the rule of law chain.

6. In the delivery of its technical assistance programmes, UNODC has regularly encountered situations where there is the potential for increased law enforcement and criminal justice inter-agency cooperation. An important element of successful UNODC programmes to tackle transnational organized crime has been the presence of the Office as an honest broker with the knowledge and experience to bring the lead stakeholders together and assist them in focusing the available legislative, professional and operational resources on a successful common outcome in combating organized crime.

7. UNODC, in its technical assistance programme, has also provided successful support to State actors in aligning agency outcomes and encouraging regular and reciprocal operational support. On the law enforcement side, these include the Border Liaison Offices initiative, the AirCop project and the Container Control Programme. All share common challenges, approaches and successful outcomes.

8. In the framework of the Container Control Programme, UNODC has worked with 19 Governments in order to bring a range of law enforcement agencies together in a common operational capacity to strengthen border management practice and procedure against cross-border organized crime. Depending upon existing ministries' mandates and areas of operation, the programme brings together customs, police, gendarmerie, anti-narcotics agencies, coast guard, navy and other agencies in joint port control units. The outcome is an operational team with access to a broad range of legislation and powers, department records and information about criminals and current organized crime trends, professional skills, manpower and technical support.

9. In developing a multi-mandated operational unit, the Container Control Programme first assisted the participating agencies in drafting operational guidelines to determine boundaries, specific operational needs, legal restrictions or other factors in order to ensure operational clarity. This usually takes the form of a memorandum of understanding and ensures the future sustainability of the joint port control unit, as staff change through planned rotation. Forging similar, but differently mandated agencies, into a cohesive operational team requires a number of important steps and establishing trust between team members being the first. Team-building commences with a common training syllabus, delivered to all joint port control unit members and it covers new professional knowledge, skills and practices, as well as raises proficiency and confidence to a common level. Daily tasks are shared equally among the team members and results arising from successful profiling and data evaluation are similarly distributed.

10. Legal access to individual agency records or information on organized crime, on individuals or commercial entities is another common obstacle to be overcome. This initiative does not require changes to the law; rather it supports the individual agency representatives on the teams in accessing their own agency records and through applying their experience and judgement, identify what information can and

cannot be shared within the joint port control unit. Gradually, the unit builds its own database of profiles from successful interdictions, completed enquiries and interviewed persons, thereby creating a valuable law enforcement resource available to many agencies.

11. Leadership and command can be a sensitive area when strong agencies come together in an operational setting. To some degree, the different legislative mandates of each agency dictate where their lead falls, particularly as operations in response to interceptions necessitate moving from the port to other areas. Each agency represented will have a senior person leading his/her peers, but the daily duties are equally distributed. When issues arise, they are discussed at regular meetings of an inter-agency board, representing the participating agencies, which transmits its decisions to the joint port control unit team members.

12. The capacity of the Container Control Programme to harness different legislative powers, agency data and to access a wide range of manpower and technical support has been a key element of its success. Moreover, the international networking with other joint port control units, operating in other countries, fosters similar cooperation and coordination with primary trade partners.

13. The UNODC Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism follows a three-pronged approach to assisting Member States to comply with the United Nations conventions and other instruments that deal with money-laundering and terrorist financing, namely: (a) awareness-raising; (b) legal, regulatory and institutional capacity-building; and (c) the provision of tailored technical assistance and capacity-building to regulators, financial intelligence units, law enforcement and judiciary authorities, as well as private sector actors on operational matters to counter money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. In each of these approaches, the Programme stresses the need for national-level coordination, as well as regional and international cooperation.

14. Through the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism, ongoing support is provided to the Prosecutor Placement Programme, a capacity-building programme developed to give confiscation prosecutors with limited experience a practical understanding of asset confiscation methodologies and practices by placing them in the office of a more experienced confiscation legal team for one to two months. The Programme currently operates in Southern Africa in conjunction with the South African National Prosecution Authority's Asset Forfeiture Unit. In addition to building capacity for new prosecutors dealing with confiscation, this programme enhances inter-agency cooperation and showcases Member State involvement in regional development. The Global Programme is seeking to launch a similar programme for financial investigators.

15. To build the capacity of States in combating cash smuggling, the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism developed a Counter-Cash Courier Course. This training course provides an opportunity for national practitioners engaged in border control, police and financial intelligence unit staff to develop knowledge and skills in the monitoring cross-border transportation of cash and bearer negotiable instruments, as well as in the identification and interdiction of cash couriers. The added value of this

multi-agency training is the creation of informal practitioner networks in the target countries, which helps to overcome organizational barriers.

16. Furthermore, it is important that Member States focus on inter-agency cooperation at the national level between agencies such as police, customs, financial intelligence units, prosecutors, judges and any other actors involved in fighting organized crime also with the view to further enhancing international cooperation.

#### **IV. Regional cooperation to combat organized crime — networking the networks**

17. In its resolution 5/8, the Conference requested the Secretariat to continue to foster international and regional cooperation by, inter alia, facilitating the development of regional networks active in the field of cooperation in the fight against transnational organized crime, where appropriate, and by facilitating cooperation among all such networks with a view to further exploring the possibility of Member States envisaging a global network. Furthermore, in its resolution 6/1, the Conference requested UNODC, in conjunction with Member States, to continue to establish network and other mechanisms to facilitate formal and informal cooperation, including through regional and interregional meeting and exchanges of experience among practitioners.

##### **A. Networking between criminal intelligence centres**

18. The creation of regional centres for the exchange of criminal intelligence and coordination of operational responses has helped strengthen the fight against transnational organized crime. Such centres include the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC),<sup>1</sup> the Gulf Criminal Information Centre (GCIC),<sup>2</sup> the Joint Planning Cell (JPC),<sup>3</sup> and the Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC).<sup>4</sup> The activities of these centres resulted in significant seizures of heroin, hashish and other types of drugs, arrests of active members of criminal organizations, as well as the identification and dismantling of several organized criminal groups through coordinated multilateral operations, including controlled deliveries.

19. UNODC, in the framework of its Inter-Regional Drug Control Approach promotes leveraging the combined strengths of these centres by creating a “network of networks” to establish and/or develop links between these entities, as a force multiplier in the fight against illicit trafficking. To explore these issues, UNODC will convene an inter-agency meeting before the end of 2013, which will examine

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<sup>1</sup> States members of the CARICC include Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

<sup>2</sup> States members of GCIC include Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

<sup>3</sup> Member States participating in JPC include Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan.

<sup>4</sup> States members of SELEC include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey.

the mandates and priorities of the various agencies, explore options for collaboration and seek to identify opportunities for coordinated operational activities. Established international partners including the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the World Customs Organization, the European Police Office (Europol) and other relevant international and regional organizations will be invited to participate in the meeting.

## **B. Networks of central authorities and prosecutors focusing on organized crime**

20. As a strategy to implement Conference resolutions 5/8 and 6/1, the UNODC Global Programme for Strengthening the Capacities of Member States to Prevent and Combat Organized and Serious Crime is establishing regional networks of central authorities and prosecutors. While the approach of the networks is regional, their aim is also to support national prosecution offices in identifying good practices and institutionalize more effective structures and specialization to deal with the complexities and coordination needed in dealing with transborder crime.

21. The Network of Specialized Prosecutors against Organized Crime (known by its acronym in Spanish as “REFCO”)<sup>5</sup> was launched in March 2011, with the objective to improve transnational investigation and prosecution of organized crime by strengthening the capacities of the organized crime and specialized units and reinforcing regional and inter-regional operational and judicial cooperation. This is done at the regional level by promoting communication and the confidence-building between prosecutors in the region and offering a platform where they can share experiences and solutions to common problems, while investigating transnational organized crime.

22. As a result of its impact within the region, the Consejo Centroamericano y del Caribe de Ministerios Públicos has amended its statutes and incorporated REFECO as the governing council to implement regional initiatives in the area of organized crime. Moreover, the Ibero-America Association of Public Prosecutors (AIAMP) Plenary Assembly held in Panama in November 2012 recommended establishing a network of prosecutors, specialized in the fight against organized crime in South America, based upon the REFECO model. The Integracion System of Central America (SICA)<sup>6</sup> has also identified REFECO as the main platform for the implementation of its Capacity Building Master Plan 2013-2015.

23. The four main pillars of the activities of REFECO are as follows:<sup>7</sup>

(a) Joint cross-border investigations: Prosecutors and police officials responsible for the investigation of high-profile cases establish a joint investigation strategy to exchange information on ongoing investigations in order to dismantle organized criminal groups and seize the assets resulting from illicit activities.

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<sup>5</sup> Red de Fiscales de la Crimin Organizado. Member States that have participated in REFECO initiatives have included Columbia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama.

<sup>6</sup> Sistema de la Integracion Centroamericana.

<sup>7</sup> Additional information about REFECO is available at [www.refco.org.pa](http://www.refco.org.pa).

REFCO support has led to arrests, seizures and convictions in 12 organized crime cases, as illustrated by the following examples:

(i) In El Salvador, a high-level drug trafficker was sentenced to 80 years of imprisonment. As a result, prosecutors in Nicaragua conducted a money-laundering investigation to seize his assets. REFCO supported the exchange of information required to confiscate his property;

(ii) In Panama, prosecutors exchanged information with the Colombian authorities on different mutual legal assistance requests in a significant drug trafficking case. In order to expedite the process, REFCO supported the exchange of information through videoconferencing between the network contact points at no cost;

(iii) REFCO supported the coordination in investigations among prosecutors of Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica, which resulted in the seizure of \$543,940;

(b) Regional capacity-building programme: In cooperation with national prosecution training schools, REFCO organized regional training sessions to address common challenges, such as money-laundering, drug trafficking, extortion and gangs (“*maras*”), among others. The use of videoconferencing has proved to be an effective way to involve more participants at no cost to the project. To date, training has been provided to over 1,000 prosecutors at 12 regional workshops;

(c) Exchange Programme for Organized Crime Prosecutors: This programme fosters direct contacts that build trust and understanding of the respective legal systems and requirements of countries in the region and the identification of good practices that help prosecutors overcome challenges in prosecution. In October 2012, 11 Prosecution Offices and more than 100 prosecutors participated in this initiative as tutors and mentors over 10 days. A group of eight prosecutors were involved in exchanges held in Panama, Costa Rica, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic and Colombia. The Police Community of the Americas (AMERIPOL) also actively participated in this exchange;

(d) Technical assistance: REFCO provides support to public prosecution offices in order to reinforce national structures and to effectively apply new laws and assist them in better addressing transnational organized crime at the regional level. Results have included:

(i) In El Salvador, REFCO supported the implementation of wire-tapping legislation which, although adopted in 2010, had not been utilized. In June 2013, REFCO organized a meeting with the prosecutor training institute, at which prosecutors from Colombia, Guatemala and Honduras and the Attorney General of Costa Rica supported the review of the role and functions of different specialized units in El Salvador dealing with organized crime in order to have a more effective and coordinated structure;

(ii) In Honduras, the establishment of the Anti-Extortion Unit was a direct result of advice from the El Salvador Prosecution Office and the REFCO workshop on the investigation of extortion offences;

(iii) In Panama, REFCO supported the implementation of the adversarial system.

24. Following the successes of REFCO, a West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors (WACAP) was established in the framework of the Global Programme for Strengthening the Capacities of Member States to Prevent and Combat Organized and Serious Crime, the UNODC Regional Programme for West Africa (2010-2014), and the implementation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Regional Action Plan to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa (2008-2011), which is the eventual successor to this Regional Action Plan.

25. The WACAP network was the result of a meeting held in Dakar in November 2012 to review the implementation of the Bamako Declaration and Strategic Framework on Impunity, Justice and Human Rights adopted in December 2011. Under Strategic Objective 1, States endorsed that specific actions that should be undertaken, including advocating for the ratification of the instruments and their harmonization with national laws; conducting an overview of ratifications and implementation of the regional conventions on mutual legal assistance and extradition; promoting mutual legal assistance networks among magistrates in different countries; and developing a regional strategy to facilitate prosecution of persons involved in transnational organized crime.

26. The WACAP network aims to support central authorities and prosecutors dealing with organized crime through the same types of activities undertaken under REFCO. Specific outcomes of the WACAP network will include:

(a) Establishing contact points for the purpose of facilitating mutual legal assistance requests and supporting the establishment of central authorities, where they do not exist;

(b) Enhancing understanding of existing regional and international legal instruments on judicial cooperation in criminal matters;

(c) Providing training to improve skills to more effectively and efficiently make and respond to requests for mutual legal assistance, extradition and the confiscation of proceeds of crime, through the use of case studies, training-the-trainer training and tools, as well as the sharing of good practices;

(d) Sharing information and modalities about drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime between countries within the region, and with countries in other regions, so that prosecutors consider the cross border and international linkages of such crimes;

(e) Facilitating training concerning the prosecution of different types of organized criminal activity and to enhance capabilities in prosecuting complex cases;

(f) Identifying technical assistance needs;

(g) Supporting operational cooperation on specific cases, as required.

### **C. Asset forfeiture mechanisms**

27. The UNODC Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism is working with Member States to enhance



their capacities in identifying and confiscating illicit assets, through the development of asset forfeiture legislation and increasing practitioner skills and networking. The Programme supports the development and operation of two asset forfeiture mechanisms — the Asset Recovery Network for Southern Africa (ARINSA), where a mentor has been posted to support the ARINSA secretariat, and the Red de la Recuperation de Activos de GAFISUD (RRAG), to which continued support has been given. Based on the model of Europol's Camden Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network (CARIN), these regional mechanisms encourage collaboration, information sharing and cooperation between prosecutors, investigators and law enforcement dealing with asset confiscation and recovery at the national and regional levels. The Global Programme has also supported efforts to launch a regional asset forfeiture network for prosecutors and financial investigators in Asia Pacific, as well as West Africa. Proposals have also been put forward for the creation of similar systems for the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean and for Russian-speaking countries in Central Asia.

#### **D. Combating the illicit trade in firearms**

28. UNODC developed a Global Project on Firearms with a view to assisting Member States in the ratification and implementation of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the Organized Crime Convention. The provision of technical assistance under this programme prioritizes legislative development and capacity-building to promote regional harmonization and strengthen the investigative and prosecutorial capacities of criminal justice practitioners.

29. The Global Project on Firearms provides specialized legal assistance for the review, assessment and development or amendment of national legislation in order to ensure compliance with the Firearms Protocol and to foster legislative harmonization at subregional and regional levels.

30. Technical assistance is aimed at strengthening the criminal justice responses to firearms trafficking, including capacity-building to detect, investigate and prosecute firearms criminality, illicit trafficking cases and their links to organized crime by making effective use of mechanisms of international law enforcement and judicial cooperation and enhanced information exchanges. To support this legal and technical assistance work, UNODC is in the process of developing a series of specialized tools on firearms, such as the Model Law on Firearms, which is available in English, French and Spanish. A comprehensive training curriculum on firearms and specialized courses for investigators, prosecutors, legal drafters, civil society and firearms transfer control authorities is under development. The countries in West Africa and Latin America will benefit from 10 training sessions in 2013-2014.

## V. Looking to the future

### A. Inter-agency cooperation

31. The Container Control Programme has proven to be an effective enforcement response to disrupt the flow of illicit drugs and illegal goods crossing maritime trade borders. Effective as border interdiction is, dismantling the networks behind each operation is a more important goal and this often entails the need to recover evidence from foreign jurisdictions.

32. UNODC is seeking to support law enforcement authorities in identifying some of the investigation opportunities that are presented in most seizures of illicit commodities. It also aims to convey to them details on how, through institutionalizing procedures and practices, delivering appropriate training, and providing simple equipment, they can use the successes of initiatives, such as the Container Control Programme, as a springboard for investigations aimed at dismantling organized crime networks.

33. The detection of illicit shipments, such as controlled drugs, counterfeit goods, endangered flora and faunas, toxic waste and other high-profit criminal commodities that are being transported in shipping containers, rarely occurs at their point of origin. Frequently, the contraband has already travelled thousands of kilometres from dispatch to the point of its eventual destination.

34. In some cases, port control units report seizures to the relevant national authority, but the extent to which the latter are willing or able to conduct a thorough investigation is currently unknown, and varies from country to country. Where the country of origin is different from the one where the goods have been seized, there is little likelihood that all potential avenues of inquiry will be exhausted, despite the fact that, in order to move large quantities of illicit goods, the perpetrators need to be highly organized and their activities will almost always constitute serious crimes.

35. The Organized Crime Convention promotes the use of law enforcement cooperation and special investigative techniques and it emphasises the benefits of international cooperation and of sharing of analytical expertise between Member States.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, UNODC's Global Programme for Strengthening the Capacities of Member States to Combat Organized and Serious Crimes serves as a vehicle for the delivery of technical assistance in these key areas. Through this programme, it is proposed to work in synergy with the UNODC technical assistance initiatives, such as the Container Control Programme and the Laboratory and Scientific Section, to deliver investigative training to law enforcement agencies and, where necessary, provide equipment to assist investigations in follow-up to seizures of contraband. Such training could include:

(a) Crime scene control and management;

(b) Full forensic examination, including testing for fingerprints and DNA material, sampling of drugs for comparison and linking to other drug seizures; sampling of chemicals; photographs of concealment methods and packaging;

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<sup>8</sup> United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, articles 20, 27, 29 and 30.

(c) Research of all available data relating to the originators of the goods, including establishment of communication lines with investigators in the country of origin in order to identify offenders through data such as from telephone and other communication records;

(d) Criminal intelligence analysis to identify and fill intelligence gaps;

(e) Sharing details with the relevant INTERPOL National Central Bureau to ensure all data is recorded within their databases;

(f) Guidance in the establishment of joint investigation teams between the affected countries.

36. Pilot activity in this area has begun with research following up on all seizures of cocaine and heroin over the preceding 12 months in selected port control units in order to determine the extent and quality of investigations conducted and to identify further action. On the basis of this evaluation, mechanisms will be established for the timely referral of seizures to the appropriate investigative team and to INTERPOL. At the same time, assessments of the capacity of counterparts are being conducted and areas for technical assistance pertinent to each country identified. From this information, a schedule of activities, including investigative training, multi-jurisdiction case file management, meetings between investigators from countries associated with the enquiry and procurement of equipment, such as forensic examination kits will be developed.

37. It is reasonable to believe that, through this approach, persons connected with port seizures will be arrested and networks dismantled. Investigations could lead to further seizures, once *modi operandi* are better understood.

38. Activities undertaken under this initiative could work together with other UNODC initiatives, such as REFCO, WACAP, the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism and the Global Firearms Programme. Other benefits likely to accrue from this initiative are:

(a) Promotion of an integrated approach within UNODC programmes;

(b) Causing maximum disruption to the organized criminal groups behind these cargo movements by securing evidence to identify and arrest the perpetrators;

(c) Strengthening partnerships with INTERPOL by making a tangible contribution to their new African policy agenda and its operational responses.

39. Following the evaluation of this project's pilot phase in selected countries, there is potential to extend it to countries where the Container Control Programme is operating, and include investigations with regard to all illicit commodities detected by joint port control unit teams.

## **B. Interregional cooperation**

40. UNODC will continue its strategy to support the establishment and implementation of networks of central authorities and prosecutors in other regions and several States have already expressed interest in establishing such networks. UNODC would then begin to link the networks. For example, it is envisioned that

an interregional meeting between REFCO and WACAP to discuss the drug trafficking links between their regions might be held in 2015.

41. UNODC, through the Global Programme for Strengthening the Capacities of Member States to Prevent and Combat Organized and Serious Crime, is providing oversight and expertise, in cooperation with other sections and the field offices, to support the establishment and implementation of these networks. Each network will then need to be tailored to the needs of the respective region and secure the support of the respective Governments, relevant regional organizations, as well as the international community.

42. Examples of different kinds of networks of prosecutors and their benefits were reviewed in the context of the implementation of the UNODC regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries and during a meeting with members of the Gulf Cooperation Council in June 2013.

43. With regard to firearms, building upon the positive experience with the Digest of Organized Crime Cases initiative, the Global Firearms Programme plans to continue promoting regional cooperation and the exchange of good practices and lessons learned in investigation and prosecution of firearms trafficking and related forms of organized crime and other serious crimes by supporting the establishment of networks of firearms experts.

44. The Global Firearms Programme has identified the importance of integrating components of the project within the newly formulated UNODC regional programmes. There is also potential for the development of joint projects with other United Nations entities and intergovernmental organizations.

## **VI. Challenges to successful implementation**

45. Through the implementation of technical assistance programmes, as well as through discussions held in conferences, meetings, including those of intergovernmental bodies, the following obstacles and challenges to successful post-seizure investigations of illicit drug seizures and organized crime offences involving multiple jurisdictions and agencies have been identified:

- Need to gather evidence against the principals and not just the offenders caught with the contraband in order to sustain prosecutions that dismantle syndicates;
- Insufficient analysis of information linking organized crime offences to individuals and syndicates;
- Need to improve the coordination of post-seizure investigations involving multi-jurisdictions and different agencies;
- Need to increase the exchange of information among investigators, prosecutors and related officials engaged in cross-border investigations of organized crime offences;
- Insufficient gathering of evidence from foreign jurisdictions;
- Need to improve the coordination of multi-jurisdictional investigations and planning prosecution strategies;

- Inadequate national legislation on the use of special investigative techniques;
  - Insufficient training provided to enhance the professional skills of law enforcement agencies, prosecutors and judges in applying special investigative techniques;
  - Need to better secure crime scenes and ensure professional responses from first responders and lead investigators;
  - Inadequate evidence-handling, storage and presentation compliant with prosecution and court requirements;
  - Lack of political will to pursue and actively prosecute money-laundering cases;
  - Lack of coordination and information sharing between national agencies and insufficient human and financial resources.
-