UNODC and Partners discuss human rights in stolen asset recovery measures in Kyrgyzstan

With the financial support of the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of International Narcotics & Law Enforcement (INL), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Programme Office (UNODC) in the Kyrgyz Republic conducted a roundtable discussion on ensuring the rights and freedoms of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic in the implementation of the measures aimed at improving the efficiency of the national system for the identification, search, seizure, and recovery of stolen assets.

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Visit to Latvia helps the Kyrgyz Probation Department to introduce new methods of work

The European Union in Kyrgyzstan (EU) - UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) project on supporting the Justice Sector Reform in the Kyrgyz Republic: Advancing Probation and Integrated Justice Information (#JUST4ALL) organized an exchange visit of five officials of the Probation Department to the Republic of Latvia on 21-25 November 2022.

During the mission, the Kyrgyz delegation learned the best practices of Latvian Probation Service on probation supervision,
Organized as part of the UNODC Project "Support to the Kyrgyz Republic in the field of identification, confiscation and recovering the illicitly-acquired assets emanating from corruption activities", the event gathered over 20 representatives from the diplomatic community, international organizations, and civil society.

Mr. Igoris Krzechkovskis, the UNODC international expert paid attention that the reformed system of financial investigations cannot negatively influence or be used against business entities and taxpayers that operate within the framework of the current legislation. “Based on these tasks, all measures proposed within the framework of the Project implementation were first of all evaluated in terms of their transparency, as well as the successful experience of their application in other states”, noted Mr. Krzechkovskis.

On 16 December, UNODC facilitated a monitoring group meeting which presented a methodology for internal and external monitoring of the probation service in Kyrgyzstan and monitoring mission report to the Ombudsman Office and Probation Department.

The monitoring methodology was developed jointly by the Ombudsman Office of the Kyrgyz Republic and Probation Department under the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The purpose of the assessment was to test the developed methodology in several probation offices, including human rights issues, identifying the current situation, problems and prospects, as well as developing recommendations for further improvement of the probation service in the Kyrgyz Republic.
1 mln worth security equipment handed over to the Prison Service

On 16 December, UNODC handed over to the Prison Service under the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic security equipment, including radio stations, lamps, land line phones, metal detectors and fire security items for the amount of 1 million soms.

The handover was a follow up of the security audit conducted by UNODC. A security audit tool was developed and piloted in prisons # 3, 16 and 27 to ensure the physical and procedural security. The equipment was delivered as part of the UNODC Project on Foreign Terrorist Fighters Detention Programme funded by the US State Department Counterterrorism Bureau (INL).

UNODC and Partners enhance capacity of law enforcement and justice practitioners of Kyrgyzstan on financial investigation of stolen assets

UNODC Programme Office in the Kyrgyz Republic in close cooperation with the Prosecutor General’s Office and the State Financial Intelligence Service under the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic conducted two seminars focused on Improvement of the efficiency of conducting parallel financial investigations and stolen asset recovery and enhancement of the effectiveness of interagency and international cooperation in parallel financial investigations and asset recovery. Seminars were conducted for 25 representatives of law enforcement agencies (LEA) and supervisory bodies, as well as 19 representatives of training and methodological centers under the competent authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The participants of the seminars discussed practical issues faced by LEA in the field of controlling the costs of suspected persons, identifying property registered in the name of third parties, as well as tactics of conduct of financial investigations. As noted, effective interagency and international cooperation in this field is a strong tool in the fight against corruption and organized crime.
UNODC organized a study visit of Justice Sector officials to Indonesia

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) organized a study visit for high-level officials of the Kyrgyz Republic, including the Head of the Situation Center, Minister of Justice, Deputy Minister of Labor, Social Support and Migration, Chair of the Prison Service, Director and other officials from the Probation Department to Republic of Indonesia to learn their experience on supervision of violent extremist and terrorist offenders.

During the mission delegation visited the National Anti-Terrorism Agency, where they discussed the role of the Agency in coordination of efforts of departments in support of the Ministry of Justice in rehabilitation and reintegration of persons convicted on violent extremism.

UNODC presents measures to improve the effectiveness of the national system of financial investigations for stolen asset recovery

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in cooperation with the Prosecutor General’s Office and the State Financial Intelligence Service under the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic, conducted a roundtable discussion on support provided to the Kyrgyz Government in search, identification, confiscation, and recovery of stolen assets emanating from corruption activities.

The event was organized as part of the UNODC’s project "Support to the Kyrgyz Republic in the field of identification, confiscation and recovering the illicitly-acquired assets emanating from corruption activities" and implemented with financial support from the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL). The roundtable gathered some 30 senior law enforcement and supervisory authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic. During the discussion the Head of UNODC Programme Office in the Kyrgyz Republic Mr. Andrey Seleznev underlined that within the framework of the UNODC Project launched in April 2022 and with the aim to develop an Interagency Action Plan, as well as to implement the activities envisaged therein, the law enforcement and supervisory authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic took active participation in UNODC working meetings and roundtables led by experts in the area and presented the country experience and practices in search and recovery of stolen assets.
Youth of Kyrgyzstan engaged in the “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence against women and girls” Global Campaign

To support the “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence against women and girls” Global Campaign, UNODC Programme Office in the Kyrgyz Republic launched an on-line video/photo/art competition among youth of Bishkek city aged 13 to 20 under the slogan of “Don’t be scared. Stop it. Live!” This is the first digital contest, creating NFTs out of youth art works in partnership with WeinCrypro and OLOLO House. The competition was conducted as part of the UNODC-implemented project “Promoting effective investigation and prosecution of gender-based violence in the Kyrgyz Republic” and supported by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) of the US State Department.

“I thank you for the opportunity to be with you today to honor those participants that have utilized their artistic skill and talent to spread the message concerning the dangers of gender-based violence. The United States takes the issue of gender-based violence very seriously and works with our partners, such as UNODC, to not only convey that message but to also develop programs to educate and reduce the number of gender-based violence cases. Competitions such as this, shows that message of combatting gender-based violence can be expressed in many ways. Each of which can reach groups that may not otherwise be aware of the dangers and consequences of gender-based violence”, said Mr. Charls Hardway, Director of Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Mr. Andrey Sleznev, Head of the UNODC Programme Office in the Kyrgyz Republic, welcomed the contestants and, on behalf of the UNODC, expressed gratitude for their participation and caring stance on a problem that, unfortunately, continues to grow in a country in which women and girls are abused.

“Women in Kyrgyzstan suffer from domestic violence, human trafficking and other forms of physical or sexual abuse. In addition, the revival of some forms of socio-cultural practice, often misinterpreted as a religious custom, is increasingly restricting a woman’s right to take control of her own life,” Mr. Sleznev said.

“In 21st century, each person should take responsibility for his actions. Not every one can explain and judge his/her actions correctly especially if a person committed a crime. I think this problem [GBV] should not only be discussed but must be solved, eradicated. I believe that life without gender-based violence will develop faster if not only men’s opinion is counted”, said Darkhan Talantbaev, first prize winner, when explaining his artwork.
The European Union and UNODC joint initiative “Support to Justice Sector Reform in the Kyrgyz Republic: Advancing Probation and Integrated Justice Information Management (JUST4ALL) held an inter-agency meeting, with participation of representatives from Prison Service, Probation Department and Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic. The meeting aimed to discuss mechanisms of cooperation between prison service and probation department.

All penitentiary services are undergoing the systematization and digitalization process, introducing modern operational methods aligned with international standards, ensuring respect to rule of law and human rights. According to the Government resolution, all penitentiary institutions shall use Automated Information System “Penitentiary Probation” and “Offenders, detainees” to register offenders set for release and all types of prisons across the country, including their inmates. During the discussion, the gaps in inter-agency business/operational procedures, challenges in introduction of Automated Informational Systems were identified.

Mr. Ruslan Romanov, Head of Department for Policy on Penitentiary, Probation and Forensic in Ministry of the Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic, Mr. Kuban Kazakov, Director of the Probation Department, Mr. Marat Satayev, Deputy Head of the Department of Educational, Social and Psychological Work of the Prison Service under the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic had an open discussion with the participants, where different issues were considered, and recommendations to strengthen the cooperation was suggested.
UNODC Programme Office in the Kyrgyz Republic handed over a car repair station to the open-type colony #32 of the Prison Service under the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic to support prison-based rehabilitation and social reintegration of prisoners into the society. The colony #32 is located in Novopavlovka village which is 20 km from the center of Bishkek city, Kyrgyzstan.

Over 10 years, UNODC has been closely cooperating with the Prison Service under the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic. As a result of joint efforts, some good progress has been made in the field of establishing conditions for prison-based rehabilitation and social reintegration of convicts, improving facilities and living conditions in prisons, and strengthening the professional skills of employees working with convicts for terrorist and extremist crimes.

“The car repair service station will become an additional platform for the imprisoned to acquire professional technical education and provide them with new jobs opportunities”, said Mr. Andrey Seleznev, Head of the UNODC Programme office in the Kyrgyz Republic. The total budget for the construction of the station and the purchased equipment amounted to over 5 million soms.

The station was established as a part of a joint UNODC and UNDP project on management of violent extremist prisoners and prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons of the Kyrgyz Republic with generous financial support from the UN Peacebuilding Fund.
Kyrgyzstan’s Probation Department and National University Sign Agreement to Introduce Probation Management in the Academic Curriculum and Offer Work Placements for Students to Consider a Career in the Probation Service

The Probation Department under the Ministry of Justice and the Kyrgyz National University named after Zhusup Balasagyn signed an agreement today to develop and roll out special courses for future probation specialists.

“Probation Officers supervise offenders and help them make better life choices. They protect the public by preventing reoffending and helping probation clients to become productive citizens”, stated Mr. Tolobek Abdyrakhmanov, Rector of the Kyrgyz National University. “In addition to law, the training program for students who choose this subject, will include penitentiary psychology, pedagogy and other essential disciplines for working with probation clients. To gain direct work experience, internships at the Probation Department are foreseen”.

The Probation Department is a relatively young institution established three years ago. It currently employs 258 people in its Bishkek headquarters, 3 interregional departments and more than 50 territorial probation offices.

“Given that we currently service over 25,000 clients, the educational level of probation officers requires constant improvement and specialization to be able to work with the wide variety of cases coming our way. To provide tailored social, legal and psychological assistance to probation clients, we also need to diversify the composition of our staff to ensure we attract people with the right mix of knowledge and skills, in particular as it relates to communication skills and understanding of psychology and social work”, said Mr. Almazbek
The project is divided into two main components addressing two areas of criminal justice reform: probation and criminal justice information management.

“A key aim of the joint EU/UNODC JUST4ALL program is to work with the Probation Department to improve training and professional development opportunities for probation officers. This includes the development of a standardized training program at the Probation Department, but also entails the promotion of new partnerships, such as the one we are witnessing today with the Kyrgyz National University”, said Mr. Andrey Seleznev, Head of the UNODC Programme office in the Kyrgyz Republic.
Kyrgyz Security Council proposes amendments to drone flight rules

In December 2022, the IWG on the development of a regulatory framework for the development and regulation of the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) complexes in the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic submitted draft regulatory documents for consideration to the Government of Kyrgyzstan.

This work was supported by UNODC under an ongoing project.

UNODC conducted an advanced training for the Counter Narcotics Service on the officers on the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

In continuation of developing the skills of the Counter Narcotic Service under the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) team of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, from December 19 to 24, 2022, UNODC organized a refresher course for 5 operators and 3 technicians on the use of UAV.

The main goal of the advanced level training was to prepare the Counter Narcotic Service employees to independently operate and maintain the UAV, including payloads.

The Counter Narcotic Service personnel was trained by the Republican Unitary Enterprise "Research and Production Center for Multifunctional Unmanned Systems" of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.
UNODC Promotes the Rule of Law Through Model United Nations in Kyrgyzstan

Justice and the rule of law are part of our lives and affect us on a daily basis. People, and especially youth, are concerned about these and related issues. In this regard, UNODC Programme office in the Kyrgyz Republic in cooperation with the "Interact Kyrgyzstan", a youth charity organization which supports the vulnerable people in the country, conducted a Model United Nations (MUN). This Model was devoted to the 16-days activism against gender-based violence.

According to Mr. Andrey Seleznev, Head of the UNODC Programme office in the Kyrgyz Republic, the MUN offers a popular way to learn about the United Nations and to give tomorrow's leaders an insight into negotiations at the international level.

“This is the second MUN which was co-organized by UNODC in 2022. It truly becomes a good tradition to organize such events together with active and critically thinking youth of Kyrgyzstan”. Over 100 youth aged 14-21 came together from 10 universities and 7 schools of Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan, to try negotiating and come to the common ground on announced theme.

UNODC WTO-CCP builds Port control unit in Batken city, Kyrgyzstan

UNODC WTO-CCP is building a new Port Control Unit for Batken officers, southern part of Kyrgyzstan. The construction works are planned to be completed by about 20-25th of February.
UNODC Programme Office in the Kyrgyz Republic Marked the World AIDS Day in Kyrgyzstan

UNODC, being one of the co-sponsoring agencies of the global Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), works to support the efforts of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and civil society sector in development and implementation of programmes of prevention and gives attention specifically to drug users and populations living in prisons and other freedom-restrictive settings, including those for adolescents in conflict with the law.

UNODC BECOMES A MEMBER OF THE STATE COMMITTEE ON COMBATING HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS AND MALARIA

On 11 November 2022, a consortium of international organizations nominated Ms. Chinara Maatkerimova, National Program Officer, UNODC Programme Office in the Kyrgyz Republic as a new member of the Committee on Combating HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria under the Coordinating Council for Public Health under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. Ms. Maatkerimova was nominated to the post for the next two years and will represent UNODC.

“This membership will allow UNODC to bring its expertise and approaches to the joint efforts of all partners in fighting HIV/AIDS epidemic in the country and region”, informs Ms. Maatkerimova.

The Committee on Combating HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria under the Coordinating Council for Public Health under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is a coordination platform that operates on a voluntary basis, created to ensure coordination and interaction of interested state bodies, as well as non-governmental and public organizations in addressing issues related to the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The success of any National HIV/AIDS programme is highly dependent on the capacity of the Law Enforcement (LE) officials and officers, who are recognized to have the vital role in protecting and promoting public health, especially the health of diverse and vulnerable communities.

“Enhancing the role of Law Enforcement in HIV prevention and creating effective partnerships between police and other sectors, including civil society organizations, is instrumental to HIV prevention efforts among people who use drugs and people in prisons” outlined Ms. Zhannat Kosmukhamedova, Head, Regional Programme Office for Eastern Europe; Regional EECA Adviser (HIV/Drugs) Global focal point on Law Enforcement and HIV.

Supporting the implementation of the Joint Order on approval of the Interagency Action Plan to overcome legal barriers to HIV and TB services in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2022

2025, UNODC Programme office in the Kyrgyz Republic conducted trainings for over 58 heads of local divisions of the Ministry. Internal Affairs and 17 heads of prisons and officials from The Prison Service under the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic on legal issues related to HIV and tuberculosis services to key populations. This work is performed with the financial support from USAID and UNAIDS.

HARM REDUCTION

UNODC has established partnership with the “Harm Reduction Association”, which consists of 8 strong NGO organizations in its work related to HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. Through this network, UNODC promotes HIV community-led monitoring (CLM). It is an accountability mechanism for HIV responses at different levels, led and implemented by local community-led organizations of people living with HIV, networks of key populations, other affected groups or other community entities.

The Association had adopted the UNAIDS tool on Establishment of community-led monitoring of HIV-services to national needs and conducted trainings for the members of their network across Kyrgyzstan.

It is expected that the capacity of local community-based organizations in qualitative monitoring of HIV-services provided by different service-providers will raise and, thus, contribute to their high quality, access, and efficiency in effective response to HIV epidemic in the country and region. The project is implemented with financial support from UNAIDS.
UNODC enhanced capacity of prosecutor officers on evidence-based prosecution

Some 25 investigators from the prosecution offices of Osh city, Osh, Jalal-Abad and Batken regions and the Military Prosecution Office enhanced their capacity on evidence-based prosecution. The training was organized by the UNODC Programme Office in the Kyrgyz Republic (KR) in cooperation with the Training Center of the Kyrgyz Prosecutor General’s Office (PGO).

UNODC trainers facilitated the application of theoretical knowledge of participants in practice. The prosecutors studied several real cases and made up a plan of criminal investigation, conducted expert assessments, and gave legal qualification to the actions of all perpetrators.

The investigators examined cases on money laundering, legalization of illegal income, large-scale tax evasion, financial crimes in customs, financial pyramids and frauds.

For more information and media inquiries, contact:

Vasilina Brazhko
Communication and PR Specialist
at UNODC Criminal Justice and PVE Programmes in Central Asia

by +996775987817
e-mail: vasilina.brazhko [at] un.org