

DECLARATION

on strengthening of cooperation in countering the illicit trafficking of drugs and precursors, and abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances

*Ninth meeting of the States parties to the Memorandum of Understanding
on Sub-Regional Drug Control Cooperation (1996)*

Ashgabat, 5 May 2015

The delegations of the Azerbaijan Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Russian Federation, Turkmenistan, the Aga Khan Development Network and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), gathered at the Ninth meeting of the States parties to the Memorandum of Understanding on Sub-Regional Drug Control Cooperation (hereinafter referred to as MoU) and agreed on the following:

Emphasizing that illicit trafficking of drugs, psychotropic substances (hereinafter referred to as drugs) and their abuse not only undermines human health and well-being, but also threatens the socio-economic and political stability of individual States and the international community as a whole;

Being concerned that an increased level of production of drugs in Afghanistan represents an additional threat to the region and beyond that requires enhanced cooperation and comprehensive measures to counter the trafficking in drugs and the smuggling of precursors at the regional and international level, based on relevant international legal instruments;

Recognizing that countering drug production and trafficking contributes to greater peace and stability in the region and that the mutual cooperation of MoU parties in collectively addressing the problem will further contribute to sustainable development and fostering of rule of law;

Recalling the steps taken under the framework of the MoU to tackle the challenges posed by the illicit production of drugs, drug trafficking and drug abuse, especially the establishment of the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) as well as the UNODC's technical cooperation programmes in support of the MoU States parties;

Confirming the obligations in regard to compliance with the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961) as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971) and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988);

Recognizing the close links between transnational organized crimes, including between drug trafficking and terrorism;

Reaffirming that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including terrorism benefitting from transnational organized crime, are activities aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy, threatening territorial integrity, security of States and destabilizing legitimately constituted Governments;

Stressing the importance of the MoU in contributing to enhanced regional and international cooperation to better counter trafficking of drugs and related illicit financial flows, especially within the framework of shared responsibility for implementation of the Confidence Building Measures as outlined in the Heart of Asia process;

Supporting in this regard the technical cooperation programmes of UNODC in Central Asia and for the wider region and the role played by the Azerbaijan Republic and the Russian Federation in facilitation of enhanced regional cooperation;

Welcoming the launch of the new UNODC Programme for Central Asia (2015-2019) in partnership with the Central Asian countries;

Renewing our commitment to strengthening cooperation under the MoU, including:

1. **Recognize** that action against the world drug problem is a common and shared responsibility requiring an integrated and balance approach in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and particularly with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs of States, human rights and fundamental freedoms;
2. **Express confidence** that development of cooperation among the States of the region with the support of international organizations and donor countries, in accordance with the principle of common and shared responsibility, will promote effective measures against drug trafficking to create a solid shield against their spread;
3. **Emphasize** the importance of the Special Session of the General Assembly to be convened in 2016, with an aim to promote international cooperation towards an integrated and balanced strategy to counter the world drug problem, and **re-iterate** the commitment of MoU Parties to strengthen regional and international cooperation to meet the objectives as set out within the UNGASS preparatory process;
4. **Strengthen** international cooperation in preventing and combating illicit financial flows linked to drug trafficking, from anti-money laundering perspective;
5. **Promote** international cooperation in responding to new psychoactive substances and amphetamine-type stimulants, including methamphetamine;
6. **Promote** the protection of children and young people, with particular reference to the illicit sale and purchase of internationally or nationally controlled substances and of new psychoactive substances via the internet;
7. **Emphasize** on the importance of “institutional capacity building” in countering narcotics as well as sharing of good practices and lessons learned with countries in the region and beyond to better respond to the emerging challenges;
8. **Express** readiness to support the activities of CARICC which has been established within the frame of the MOU with UNODC’s support, and **calls upon** CARICC to further strengthen its cooperation with the competent agencies of the MoU members as well as relevant regional and inter-regional entities with the aim to facilitate sharing of information and organizing and conducting joint operational activities;
9. **Take note** of the importance of the new UNODC Programme for Central Asia as well as the UNODC Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighboring countries in promoting regional cooperation in countering narcotics;
10. **Encourage** all MoU States parties to reinforce control measures with the purpose to prevent smuggling of precursors chemicals that fuel the production of illicit drugs and in this regard **support** the relevant regional intelligence working groups;

11. **Re-iterate** the desire to strengthen multilateral cooperation in the framework of the MoU, in close coordination with UNODC, including with the purpose to strengthen law enforcement, crime prevention and legal/judicial cooperation;
12. **Note the importance** of paying more attention to the links between transnational organized crime, especially drug related crimes and corruption, and **consider** taking measures as appropriate in the framework of MoU contacts.
13. **Agree** to increase efforts to prevent drug abuse and HIV including by expanding access and availability of treatment services for drug users in the region;
14. **Welcome** the offer of the Republic of Tajikistan to host an international conference on counter narcotics at the end of May 2015 in Dushanbe to support the UNGASS preparatory process;
15. **Encourage** the donor countries and the signatories of the MoU to provide financial and in-kind contribution for the implementation of the new UNODC Programme for Central Asia (2015-2019) to further support the efforts to address the challenges posed by illicit drugs in the region.

The participants, while appreciating the efforts of Turkmenistan in hosting the Ninth meeting of the States parties to the Memorandum of Understanding on Sub-regional Drug Control Cooperation, congratulated the Government of Turkmenistan with the 20th Anniversary of Neutrality of Turkmenistan including announcing the 2015 as the «Year of neutrality and peace in Turkmenistan».

Ashgabat, 5 May 2015