

Government of Japan provided 263 million Japanese yens to UNODC for Assisting the Uzbek Government in Countering Trafficking of narcotics from Afghanistan

The official signing ceremony of the Exchange of Note between the Government of Japan and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime took place at the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia in Tashkent.

The Government of Japan provided a new funding in the amount of 263 million Japanese Yens (approximately 2,500,000 USD) to the UNODC Programme “Countering Trafficking of Afghan Narcotics in Uzbekistan through the Establishment of Interagency Mobile Teams”. The Exchange Notes were signed by H.E. Mr. Nobuaki Ito, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Republic of Uzbekistan and Ms. Ashita Mittal, UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia in the presence of Mr. Ahmed Mansurov, Director of the National Information and Analytical Center on Drug Control under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

On this occasion, Ambassador Mr. Nobuaki Ito stressed that Japan attaches importance to the cooperation with UNODC and Uzbekistan in the field of border control and countering trafficking of narcotics, as is declared in the Joint Communiqué issued during the official visit of Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe to Uzbekistan in October 2015. Moreover, he emphasized that the signed programme, aiming for a capacity building of Uzbekistan’s authorities concerned, would render the trilateral cooperation and mutual trust between Japan, Uzbekistan and UNODC much deeper and stronger, as well as wished great success with the programme.

The programme activities are planned to be conducted within the framework of the UNODC Programme for Central Asia (2015-2019). Taking into account the continued relevance of the two factors - the common border with Afghanistan and attempts of the cross border drug traffickers to use the territory of Uzbekistan and its neighbouring countries in drug transit, creation of Interagency Mobile Teams (IMTs) will facilitate enhancement of the law enforcement capacity of the country. The programme activities will address the challenges in countering narcotics in Uzbekistan, and strengthen



the capacities through procurement of equipment, setting up infrastructure, conducting training courses and workshops.

Mr. Akhmed Mansurov, Director of the National Information and Analytical Center on Drug Control said: “Today’s signing ceremony of the Exchange Notes for the allocation of the grant for implementation of the Programme “Countering Trafficking of Afghan Narcotics in Uzbekistan through the Establishment of Interagency Mobile Teams” is a demonstration of the continuity of joint efforts to combat drug trafficking. I am confident that the implementation of the agreements reached will contribute to more effective addressing of the challenges we face; bring tangible benefits to our countries; and have a positive impact on the welfare, health, and safety of the region’s population”.

The planned activities will be implemented in coordination with the National Information Analytical Center on Drug Control (NCDC) and with involvement of the Uzbek law enforcement agencies including the National Security Service, the State Customs Committee and the Ministry of Interior. The Interagency Mobile

Teams will also be cooperating with the other local law enforcement agencies to detect the traffickers along the railways. These teams will be established, trained as well as equipped with modern specialized equipment. The IMTs will work in close contact with the Operation Coordination Team and will evaluate the risks as well as identify the passengers that can transport illicit drugs.

While thanking the Government of Japan for its contribution and the Government of Republic of Uzbekistan for its continuing cooperation and partnership, Ms. Ashita Mittal, UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia, emphasized the need for an integrated, harmonized and comprehensive strategic approach for prevention of drug trafficking. She emphasized that effective counter narcotics and transnational organized crime strategies are central to peace, stability, and effective governance based on the rule of law, to ensure sustainable development. It is a shared responsibility to prevent drug trafficking for the strong rule of law and a healthy society. UNODC is committed to support the efforts of the Government.

Sixth Expert Forum on Criminal Justice for Central Asia

On 17-18 November in Tashkent the Sixth expert forum on criminal justice for Central Asia brings together leading experts and policy makers to discuss the latest reforms, trends and initiatives in the criminal justice sector in the countries of Central Asia.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes and its partners Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the OSCE and Penal Reform International continue to engage in promoting exchange of experiences and expertise in strengthening the rule of law and providing assistance to promote more effective, humane and fair criminal justice systems. Participants of the Expert Forum emphasized the essential characteristics of a criminal justice system in a democratic society, including fairness, efficiency and adherence to human rights standards. In addition, side events provided an opportunity to highlight key issues, including countering institutional incentives for torture and judicial ethics organized respectively by Penal Reform International and the International Commission of Jurists. As the UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia, Ms. Asita Mittal emphasized: "This forum is an excellent example of our joint work in promoting international standards in crime prevention and



criminal justice. We all agree that 'reform of the criminal procedure legislation' is an important entry point and a prerequisite for the establishment of a democratically accountable criminal justice system that protects human rights." "Conclusions and recommendations of national and foreign experts and guests of the today's event will serve as a basis for further improvement of criminal justice systems as well as strengthen the independence of the judiciary in Uzbekistan

and other countries of the Central-Asian region", said Shayunus Gaziev, Chairperson of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Expert Forum is a leading regional platform in Central Asia for expert discussions on criminal justice reforms, human rights, and the harmonization of national legislation with the international standards in line with UN standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice.

Intelligence analysis training held in CARICC

Intelligence analysis training for the law enforcement analysts of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Russia and Uzbekistan held in October in Almaty Kazakhstan.

Criminal intelligence collection and information management capacities, established mechanisms for exchange, receipt and dissemination of information between the drug control agencies was in the focus of the training course organized jointly by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) UN-

ODC and CARICC. This course emphasized the utilization of analytical tools, enhanced strategic interaction between the analytical and operational units/departments of the law enforcement agencies. Mr. Charlie Barnes, DEA Intelligence analysts emphasized the importance of the

intelligence and strategic analysis and shared DEA experience on "Introduction to the Intelligence analysis", "Open Source Information Analysis" and Critical thinking. Practical part of the training was facilitated by the national experts whom were trained by the UNODC, focusing on the intelligence and strategic analysis, as well as software use. Participants were also updated on CARICC capacity and possible assistance they can get from it.



New building for the State Service on Drug Control

Opening ceremony of the new administrative building of the Eastern Department of the State Service on Drug Control of the Kyrgyz Republic (SSDC) was held in the Karakol city in December.

Construction of the building included application of modern construction technologies such as anti-seismic metal frames filled by thermostatic and ecological concrete walls. New administrative office was equipped with furniture and computers. This activity was conducted in the frame of the UNODC Programme for Central Asia, sub-programme 1 "Countering transnational organized crime, illicit drug trafficking and terrorism", contribution of finances from which amounted to more than 10 million Kyrgyz soms (\$147,000).

The event was attended by representatives of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Administration of the Issyk-Kul province, the Russian Embassy, the Embassy of the United States of America, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), U.S. Drug enforcement Administration (DEA) Office in Bishkek and the representative of the Interior Ministry of the Russian Federation to the Kyrgyz Republic.

"The trends of drug situation in the Kyrgyz Republic and the Central Asian region dic-



tates new rules to counter illicit drug trafficking and requires more resources and joint efforts. Therefore, the Kyrgyz Republic will continue strengthening fruitful cooperation established between the Government, the donor countries and the UNODC", said Mr. Damir Sagynbaev, the Head of the Department of Defense, Law Enforcement and Emergency of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The deputy Chief of Mission in the U.S. Embassy in Kyrgyzstan Mr. Alan Meltzer noted that, "This year, we are celebrating 25 years of U.S.-Kyrgyz bilateral relations. We cer-

tainly consider our cooperation in counter narcotics as one of the most impressive success stories in this quarter-century of cooperation".

The representative of the Interior Ministry of the Russian Federation to the Kyrgyz Republic Mr. Grigori Pustovitov said: "The Russian Federation will continue supporting the UNODC efforts, including in the frame of the ongoing reform of the law enforcement agencies."

The main donors of this component are the Governments of the Russian Federation and the United States of America

New Port Control Units opened in Tajikistan and Kazakhstan

Three new Port Control Units (PCUs) were opened in Dusanbe-2 and Nizhniy Pyanj dry ports in Tajikistan and Aktau seaport in Kazakhstan under the "UNODC-World Customs Organization (WCO) Global Container Control Programme - Regional Segment for Central Asia and Azerbaijan".

Opening of these PCUs marked logical culmination of two years the UNODC-Governments of Tajikistan's and Kazakhstan's efforts and partnership. Tajikistan has joined CCP in March 2014, Kazakhstan in July 2014. Since then, both countries participated in



all stages of capacity building measures provided by the Programme including theoretical, practical and advanced training, regional meetings, study tours and exercises aimed to information exchange. The PCUs were renovated and equipped with the computers, ContainerComm secure communication tool, search and detection equipment as well as Hazmat360ID chemical detectors.

During the opening ceremony in Tajikistan Mr. Azim Khaidar Tur-sunzoda, Deputy Head of the Customs Service under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan mentioned that CCP strengthen regional cooperation among Customs and other law enforcement agencies in the region.

Senior government officials from the Customs Service, the Drug Control Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan and the State Revenues Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan as well as representatives of the U.S. Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS), attended the event.

Mr. Marat Kabdushev, Deputy Head of the Customs Checkpoints Unit of the State revenues Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan expressed hopes that the newly opened Port Control Unit (PCU) will increase counterfeit and drug seizures.

The CCP Regional Segment for Central Asia and Azerbaijan is funded by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program.

New synthetic drugs and psychoactive substances: investigation methods and interception of contraband

UNODC is enhancing the capacities of the selected border crossing points and establishing Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) in order to detect and intercept contraband, including drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.



Twelve of the planned thirteen Border Liaison Offices on the Kyrgyz-Tajik, Kyrgyz-Uzbek, Tajik-Uzbek, Tajik-Afghan and Uzbek-Afghan borders were established and made fully operational by the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia. A series of operational activities were conducted by the appointed BLO officers to counter illicit drug trafficking in Central Asia and, as a result, more than 150 kg of narcotic substances were seized. Thirty two specialized trainings were conducted and did serve to bring an understanding of the functions of a BLO and the use of advanced technical equipment.

In September 2016 the training for the Uzbek officers of the Border Liaison Offices on new psychoactive substances and other synthetic drugs was held under the regional project “Countering the trafficking of Afghan opiates via the northern route by enhancing the capacity of key border crossings points (BCPs) and the establishment of Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) in Central Asia” in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Nineteen representatives of State Customs Committee, State Border Guard Committee and the Ministry of Interior of Uzbekistan assigned to work as BLO of-

ficers at BCPs “Oybek” and “Sariosiyo” on the Uzbek-Tajik border, “Dustlik” on the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border and “Ayritom” on the Uzbek-Afghan border gathered together at Higher Customs Military institute to learn more about new types of synthetic drugs and psychotropic substances which received widespread abuse in recent years.

The training was conducted by the team of experts representing law enforcement agencies of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Uzbekistan who worked together to complement each other to cover wide array of areas related to practical experience of criminal cases related to drug trafficking.

During the course participants had the opportunity to learn new methods of narcotics sales via the Internet as well as with the methods of investigation and combatting such types of crimes.

Addressing the event its participant representing Ministry of Interior of the Republic Uzbekistan spoke of the relevance and urgent need of the training course to combat synthetic drugs and other psychotropic substances: “Our principal objective is ultimately to fight against drug trafficking. The UNODC in partnership with donor organizations and Higher Military Customs Institute provided this brilliant opportunity to learn about new types of potentially dangerous psychoactive substances which give rise to the need of law enforcement response to adapt its efforts and capacities accordingly”.

Studying international experience on provision of methadone maintenance therapy

As preparations are underway on integration of methadone maintenance therapy (MMT) into the national health care system in Kazakhstan, the government requested assistance with studying experience of other countries.

In response to this request, UNODC in partnership with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) organized study visits to Iran and Spain. The objective was to study the main principles of planning, delivery, monitoring and funding of MMT. The participants also learned about the cooperation with non-health sector partners, including NGOs and police, in referring people to the treatment and providing social support. Both countries have achieved significant results in containing the spread of HIV and other infectious diseases among people who inject drugs (PWID). This experience is very important for Kazakhstan where HIV prevalence is lower than in the neighboring countries, but the risks of HIV spread among PWID are high. The participants of the study tour included representatives from the Office of Prime Minister, Ministry of Health and Social Development, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Economy and civil society. Asked about the main findings of the visit, Dr Sagat



Discussing public health-centered response to drug use with police officers in Barcelona

Altynbekov, Chief Expert on Addiction Treatment under the Ministry of Health noted accessibility to treatment. Essentially, each person who is dependent on heroine or other opioids can receive MMT close to his/her place of living. In Kazakhstan, therapy is available to less than 1% of the patients, so a lot of work still needs to be done.