

27 February 2008

ENGLISH ONLY

---

## **Commission on Narcotic Drugs**

### **Fifty-first session**

Vienna, 10-14 March 2008

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

**Thematic debate on the follow-up to the twentieth special session of the General Assembly: general overview and progress achieved by Governments in meeting the goals and targets for the years 2003 and 2008 set out in the Political Declaration adopted by the Assembly at its twentieth special session**

**Complementary drug-related data and expertise to support the global assessment by Member States of the implementation of the declarations and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session**

**Report by the European Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the German Society for Technical Cooperation and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime\*\***

### *Summary*

Pursuant to Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolutions 49/1 “Collection and use of complementary drug-related data and expertise to support the global assessment by Member States of the implementation of the declarations and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session” and 50/12 “Measures to meet the goal of establishing by 2009 the progress achieved in implementing the declarations and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session”, intergovernmental organizations active in the field of international drug control were invited to submit regionally consolidated comparative analyses of the current situation and trends in various areas of drug

---

\* E/CN.7/2008/1.

\*\* The text of the report is reproduced as it was received by the Secretariat.



control in their fields of action with that prevailing in the period 1998-2000. Organizations were also invited to present the actions and changes that had taken place in their regions or fields of action in relation to the implementation of the goals and targets set in the Political Declaration and the measures to enhance international cooperation to counter the world drug problem, and related action plans, adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, 8 to 10 June 1998 (A/RES/S-20/2, A/RES/S-20/3 and A/RES/S-20/4).

Several organizations provided information in response to the above request. In addition, UNODC also received unprocessed data from a number of organizations.<sup>1</sup> Where relevant, this information was used to complement the data provided by Member States through the Biennial Reports Questionnaire (BRQ) and reflected in the fifth report of the Executive Director on the world drug problem (E/CN.7/2008/2 and Addenda 1 to 6).

The report is the result from a collaborative effort between the European Commission (EC), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the German Society for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) through a project entitled “Development in a Drugs Environment – Developing a Strategic Approach to Alternative Development”. The report deals with the UNGASS “Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development” and presents the case for greater engagement with the wider development community and provides recommendations for consideration at the deliberations of the UNGASS review.

---

<sup>1</sup> ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD); Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF); South-American Financial Action Task Force (GAFISUD); South-Caucasus Anti-Drug Programme (SCAD) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

## Developing a Strategic Approach to Alternative Development

### Summary Report of the second Global Workshop

#### Meetings held in Bangkok, Thailand and Lima, Peru November-December 2007

#### 1. The Need to Scale-Up

'*Alternative Development*' is at a crossroads. There is broad agreement that as a type of rural development project Alternative Development can meet the needs of targeted communities growing opium poppy in parts of Central/ South East Asia, and Coca in the Andean countries as well as contribute to a reduction in levels of narcotics production within project areas. However, it is also recognised that the scale of illicit opium poppy cultivation in Asia as well as the generally stable coca cultivation level and the shift in the nature of donor funding towards budget support and sector strategies means Alternative Development projects are not – and cannot be – of sufficient scale to address the extent of illicit cultivation across the region.

Indeed, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) only five per cent of rural households cultivating opium poppy in Asia and twenty per cent of households cultivating coca in the Andean countries have received direct assistance from Alternative Development projects. All too often these communities, typically located in areas beyond the writ of the nation state and where insecurity prevails, are neglected by the mainstream rural development effort.

It was precisely in order to develop a strategy for engaging the wider development community to address the causes of illicit narcotic crops cultivation that >150 delegates met in Bangkok between 30 October and 1 November 2007 and in Lima 10-12 December 2007 to consider the many complex issues involved. This was the second of two global workshops<sup>2</sup> to be organized as part of an ongoing project<sup>3</sup> funded by the European Commission (EC) and implemented in partnership between the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The project has objectives that increase ownership of drug issues by the broader development community – including national, bilateral, multilateral and non-government organizations (NGOs).

---

<sup>2</sup> Global Workshop #1. Held in Berlin Germany 28-31 May 2006 with >50 attendees representing >20 narcotics producer countries, countries supporting counter-narcotics programmes and >10 agencies, NGOs and others working in support of alternative development programmes. The workshop was dynamic and demanding, and provided an excellent basis for promoting key messages linked to alternative development; and led directly to design of the second global workshop comprising regional focus and two not dissimilar, but separate meetings.

<sup>3</sup> Project 'Alternative Development'. Donor funding of the order >US\$600,000 from the EC has been augmented with estimated US\$190,000 from participating agencies for investment in a two-year project highlighting issues and opportunities for mainstreaming alternative development within national counter-narcotics development programmes. The project begun early 2006 and, is due for completion by mid-2008.

## **2. Recognizing Constraints**

Delegates at both workshops were more than aware of the difficulty of the task. Initial discussions focussed on the wider development communities apparent reluctance to engage in the drugs issue despite their pro-poor mandates and the degree of vulnerability opium poppy and coca growing communities experienced with regard to economic, political and often physical insecurity. Drawing on extensive experience of engaging with development professionals and institutions, delegates at the workshops discussed the constraints for a more constructive dialogue including the operational problems associated with working in opium poppy and coca growing areas where criminality, insecurity and weak government institutions are all endemic. The presentational risk of working in these areas as well as in addressing the problems associated with illicit drugs, particularly given the often simplistic and negative media coverage that often accompanied the subject matter, was also raised as a factor inhibiting the engagement of the wider development community.

There was, however, also a recognition amongst delegates that the language and terms associated with drug control efforts, that they themselves often use, as well as debates over the interface between development and eradication efforts, and insufficient understanding of the process by which rural households and communities moved from illicit to licit livelihoods, all weakened their arguments in convincing multilateral, bilateral and non governmental institutions that addressing the causes of illicit opium poppy and coca cultivation is fundamentally a development objective.

It was recognised that often opium poppy and coca farmers are seen as relatively wealthy due to misconceptions in the media and the tendency amongst drug control policy makers to focus on the potential gross returns on the crop per unit of land. Unfortunately the narrative of the 'wealthy' opium poppy or coca farmer has been typically favoured over accounts of the true role that illicit crops play in managing risk in environments of extreme insecurity – economic, political, physical and food – as well as discussions of the far lower returns obtained on the crops once inputs, in particular labour, and the point and time of sale (largely influenced by socio-economic status) are considered. It was recognised the failure to better explain the development context of the drugs issue can often result in the perception that 'drug control' is primarily an issue of law enforcement rather than one of promoting governance, security and economic growth – which are core development goals.

## **3. Building on 'What Works'**

Delegates drew on detailed analysis provided by four country papers from Asia – those of the People's Democratic Republic of Laos, Thailand, Myanmar and Afghanistan – and three countries in the Andean Region – Peru, Colombia and Bolivia – prepared for the workshops to learn from the experience of others in how they had integrated an analysis of the causes of illicit drug crop cultivation as well as methods to address them into national and sub national development strategies. This cross fertilization of ideas and experiences allowed delegates to identify strategies aimed at increasing the development communities' ownership over the drugs issue. The primary strategy identified was to persuade national and sub national governments of the need to integrate efforts to reduce coca and opium poppy cultivation into their development strategies and programmes.

Experience showed in the Peoples Democratic Republic of Laos, Thailand and increasingly Afghanistan how this approach could create the conditions under which development donors had to respond to the demands of the national governments to consider the drugs issue as part of their development objectives. It was highlighted that this approach was paying dividends in Afghanistan and that due to the efforts of the Government in partnership with the World Bank, a number of sectoral programmes known as the 'National Priority Programmes' were now looking at how they might maximise their impact on opium poppy cultivation. Similar successes were being seen in the People's Democratic Republic of Laos where the Asian Development Bank, bilateral agencies and other parts of the United Nations System had increasingly become part of a donor dialogue and operational response to the underlying causes of opium poppy cultivation in remote rural areas.

In the Andean countries there was less experience of integrating drugs as a cross cutting issue within national and regional development programmes and alternative development is still largely associated with a project approach. Both national governments and multilateral development agencies have so far been reluctant to move out of this more narrow approach and explore how wider rural development initiatives might maximise counter narcotics outcomes. 'Mainstreaming' is a rather new paradigm, which traditionally tends to be organized by sector. This posed a barrier to conceptualizing mainstreaming, and how it might function as part of national drug control strategies with current prevailing institutional arrangements that continue to retain a mainly sectoral perspective. Thus mainstreaming faces both technical and political challenges in the region. There are however growing signs that this situation may change. Bolivia has more recently adopted an approach where Alternative Development is included in broader development. The political power-base and much of decision-making in Bolivia is organized around local communities. Empowerment of local people leads, ultimately, to the definition of national policies. Colombia has seen a growing involvement of line ministries as well as of provincial governments in development planning in affected areas. National policies in Peru have also provided choices for decentralization as one option for local political frameworks – leading, again, into the wider implications for national debate.

#### **4. Engaging the Development Community**

It was recognised that running parallel to this strategy of encouraging national governments to integrate the causes of coca and opium poppy cultivation into their development planning there was a need to adopt an advocacy and lobbying strategy targeted at the development donors. The purpose of this effort was to raise the awareness of senior managers and technical experts of the overlap between the objectives of development institutions with pro-poor mandates and the development needs of communities cultivating opium poppy and coca.

Mechanisms for increasing the exposure of the development community to the marginal socio-economic, political and environmental conditions under which coca and opium poppy cultivation prevail included:

- (i) developing knowledge based products that explored the links between poverty and drug crop cultivation and documented the 'success stories' associated with the transition from illicit to licit livelihoods;

- (ii) facilitating field visits to source areas for development agencies/donors,
- (iii) inclusion of 'alternative development' specialists in formal working groups involved in producing sectoral development strategies such as for agriculture, rural development, private sector, and public works;
- (iv) developing an extensive informal network amongst international development agencies;
- (v) lobbying in donor capitals particularly amongst parliamentarians; and
- (vi) developing a consistent and coherent media strategy that contextualises drugs as a development issue.

## **5. Moving Forward to UNGASS in 2009**

As part of the effort to increase the engagement of development institutions, delegates at the workshop also discussed the strategic role of the upcoming assessment of the 20th United Nations General Assembly Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Countering the World Drug Problem together held in June 1998 (UNGASS). This meeting of Member States agreed to the goal of 'eliminating or reducing significantly the illicit cultivation of the coca bush, the cannabis plant and the opium poppy by the year 2008.' With regard to Alternative Development UNGASS included an 'Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development.' It was agreed that the ten year review to be held in 2008 under the auspices of Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and subsequently in 2009, at a high level segment of the 52nd CND, offered an ideal opportunity to present the case for greater engagement with the wider development community.

Delegates in Bangkok and Lima agreed a set of nine recommendations that they wished to be included in the deliberations of the UNGASS review. These target three distinct sub-sectors, government, international stakeholders and civil society, and were summarized as follows:

### **(a) Government**

- Needs to facilitate public and private sector funding to ensure the systematic and continuous implementation of rural development in areas in which illicit narcotic crops are grown.
- Ensures consistency of policies and methodologies amongst all stakeholders involved in programme development and implementation including ministries, local government and civil society organizations.
- Must adopt an integrated approach that supports social, economic and private sector development in areas in which illicit crops are grown.
- Ensures that the values, traditions and customs of local communities and civil society are reflected in national policies and laws.
- Includes support for efforts aimed at reducing the dependency on illicit drug crop cultivation within the strategic objectives of national development policies (*i.e. Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper's, Country Assistance Strategies*).

- Monitor progress through the development of indicators that are not solely related to illicit crop production but also measure the impact on the lives and livelihoods of primary stakeholders.

**(b) International Agencies**

- Should agree on a common approach and coordination of sector programmes within the national territory in order to implement effective reductions in opium and coca and improve the wellbeing of primary stakeholders.
- Should ensure that eradication is *not* undertaken until households have viable and sustainable livelihoods.
- Should not make development assistance conditional on reductions in illicit drug crop cultivation.
- Must provide long-term and flexible funding with firm sectoral approach.
- Should be innovative in raising new sources of funding for interventions aimed at reducing dependency on opium poppy and coca (*for example, climate change, Millennium Account, debt swap, etc.*).
- Should engage with communities, entities and other authorities at the local level and not limit dialogue solely to the institutions of central government.

**(c) Civil Society**

- Must be engaged at all stages of the project/investment cycle; and be encouraged and empowered to actively contribute to the development of policy.
- Should pursue domestic and international alliances of civil society to help with information exchange, develop capacity and boost opportunities for financial sustainability.
- Promote the exchange of experience (*including, but not limited to, development and counter-narcotics activities*) among the many different stakeholders, and support the empowerment of social organizations.

**6. Future Support from Development Organizations**

Given the clear overlap between the drugs and development agendas in opium poppy and coca producing countries there is a need for development organizations to consider how their programmes can address the causes of the illicit narcotic crops cultivation/production. In practice, this involves looking at development programmes through a counter narcotics lens, what some have called 'mainstreaming counter narcotics into development programmes' and others have referred to as 'undertaking development in a drugs environment'.

At the highest level of application, mainstreaming will ensure that each development programme is designed and implemented in such a way as to maximise its potential impact on containing production of illicit drugs. At minimum, mainstreaming will help ensure that projects or activities do nothing to exacerbate the existing drugs problem. Effective mainstreaming, then, will help to include elements within development activities that target specific areas in which opium

poppy and coca is grown or target those socio-economic groups that are most dependent on opium poppy and coca as a source of livelihood, but also will help build synergies with other activities that might maximise both development and counter narcotics impact. Ultimately such a process involves:

- Developing policies and programmes that are informed by the potential impacts on illicit drug crop cultivation;
  - Adjusting the focus of development programmes and projects so that they recognise and understand the potential impact they might have on illicit drug crop cultivation, and take steps to maximise positive impacts when conducting such activities;
  - Promoting coordination and encouraging programmes to be complementary in their interventions, at national, province and district level;
  - Ensuring programmes or projects do not inadvertently encourage illicit drug crop cultivation.
-