STATEMENT

Mr. Vilayat EYVAZOV

Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of
the Republic of Azerbaijan

police lieutenant-general

at fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Vienna, March 13-14, 2014
Dear Mr. Chairman!

Honourable participants of the session!

I am profoundly grateful to you for affording the opportunity to set out its position regarding the matters under discussion and to give a brief view of efforts made by our country.

Global drug threat is an extremely dangerous challenge of modern times which may entail drastic geopolitical consequences.

Illicit drug trafficking is one of the main sources of international terrorist financing. It negatively affects to socio-economic development and undermines stability and public security.

Against this background, the problem of strengthening the anti-drug capacity both at the international and regional levels and in every particular state becomes even more topical in recent times.

In Azerbaijan, this problem is dealt with at the highest level. The State Commission on Combating Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking was formed in the country according to the Presidential Decree and has been successfully functioning for many years.
Efforts are concentrated on the balanced measures for monitoring internal and cross-border tendencies affecting the current situation with drugs. The comprehensive national programme, which determines strategic priorities, goals and basic lines of activity in this area as well as the best mechanisms for achieving targets, was developed on the basis of unbiased assessment of challenges, threats and arising risks and is implemented consistently. Such aspects as improvement of the current legal framework and competent authorities’ capacity, extension of forms and methods of international cooperation, study and introduction of best practices are in the focus of attention.

A specific task of strengthening of control on sea, air and land borders and transport infrastructure facilities, improving the exchange of operational, intelligence and analytical data, their scrutiny, integration and subsequent use, professional development, fitting out of special detachments with technical means and providing them with the advanced electronic technology is tackled.

An integrated interdepartmental database of persons involved in the illicit drug trafficking was formed and is constantly updated.
Its segments contain information received from interior, national security, health, justice, prosecution agencies, customs and border services that enables to make a realistic assessment of the drug situation in the country and to track background conditions aggravating it.

Law enforcement agencies and special bodies of the Republic hold systematic and targeted activities for drug-trafficking interdiction and exposure of drug dealers. Cultivation of drug crops is actively prevented. For example, only in 2013, more than 300 tons of narcotic plants were destroyed over the area of about 700 hectares.

General and individual anti-drug activities are based on the strict observance of human rights. Among the priorities there is enhancement of the role of community, civil society, non-government organizations, and media in educational, legal and public awareness-raising work especially among young people and minors.

A policy concentrated on damping down demand for drugs, amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances and their abuse as well as detecting drug-addicted persons at an early stage of drug use and providing them with proper drug dependency treatment, medical care and timely rehabilitation is implemented.
On the whole, the pursued anti-drug policy is multifaceted, preventive and active. It is known that errors in this area of crime control may lead to a sharp deterioration of the criminal situation and contribute to the surge of particularly dangerous organized criminal offences both violent and profit-motivated.

In view of the geopolitical position of the country, specific efforts are aimed at active prediction and suppression of attempts of transnational groups to use its territory as a transit channel for drug smuggling. In this regard, effective coordination with foreign partners in addition to internal measures assumes special significance.

The Republic of Azerbaijan makes its contribution to international cooperation against drug trafficking and spread of drug addiction, and is a party to the United Nations conventions and a number of multilateral and bilateral agreements. Over the years, coordinated efforts are taken within the scope of the United Nations and European Council Development Programmes and close contacts with relevant entities of the Council of Europe, OSCE, BSEC, CIS, GUAM, etc. are maintained.

Due regard is paid to the joint activities in the format of the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination
Centre for Combating Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and their Precursors.

It is fair to say that in the context of threat expansion from the Afghan heroin traffic, this region is at the forefront in the fight which must be carried both at the international and domestic levels.

Dear participants,

Current challenges and threats are evident and adequate countermeasures against them suppose purposeful consolidation of the entire world community efforts as well as coordinated and vigorous implementation of well-thought-out domestic and foreign anti-drug strategies.

In conclusion I'd like to thank the hosts for organizing this session and their hard work in promoting common wealth as well as to assure you of our willingness to cooperate.

Thank you for your attention.