



MILESTONES

Upcoming Events

- Paris Pact Meeting in Dushanbe (10-11 April, 2006)
- Moscow EECA AIDS conference (15-17 May, 2006)
- OSCE/UNODC Joint Regional Workshop on Implementation of International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (15-16 June, 2006)

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Issue III

April 2006

TASHKENT HOSTS REGIONAL MOU MEETING TO ESTABLISH CARICC



For the last two years UNODC has been closely working with Central Asian governments on establishing the joint regional law enforcement body – Central Asian Regional Information and Cooperation Centre (CARICC) - which was the main focus of the MoU meeting on ministerial level held in Tashkent on 7-8 February. The MOU member states which include Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan agreed on the legal

frameworks and documents of the CARICC and signed the resolution for its establishment in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The new Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC), will be staffed by law enforcement officials from the countries in the region. It will compile and analyze intelligence on drug trafficking and coordinate regional law enforcement operations. The Executive Director of UNODC, Antonio Maria Costa, welcomed the decision to set up a regional coordination centre to fight illicit drug trafficking.

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan highlighted the significant UNODC efforts in strengthening regional cooperation and underlined the necessity for the CARICC to work closely with existing regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The participants also discussed the possible involvement of Afghanistan in regional initiatives. The next MoU meeting is planned to be held in Almaty, Kazakhstan in 2007.

EVENTS

UNODC TO LAUNCH NEW JOINT OPERATION TO COMBAT PRECURSORS TRAFFICKING



The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and UNODC, Regional Office for Central Asia jointly organized a meeting on 28-29 March 2006 in Tashkent with participation of representatives from Central Asian states, to discuss practical activities focusing on seizures of acetic anhydride and identification and disrupting methods and routes of diversion through the Central Asian states to Afghanistan. These joint activities would enhance the efforts already undertaken through the UNODC Regional Precursor Project and are the first of their

kind in Central Asia involving all five Central Asian states. In addition, the Governments of France, Germany, Russia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States would provide mentors for on-site training and guidance. International support would be provided through INCB Secretariat, Interpol, UNODC and WCO.

The focus of the current exercise is to educate key officers from specific border crossings on methods used to identify and intercept smuggled consignments of chemicals. Basic training would take place in Turkey to be followed up with the actual activities at selected border crossings within Central Asia, with mentors from countries with

experience in precursor interdiction providing on-site training and guidance. The emphasis would be on road transport, but attention would also be given to the seaports on the Caspian Sea and rail crossings from China and Russia. Customs, Police and Border Guards would share responsibilities and these specific activities are also to be viewed as a "First Phase" to be expanded to Afghanistan and other neighbouring countries in the future, using the lessons learned.



UNODC SUPPORTS CENTRAL ASIAN REGIONAL DRUG INFORMATION NETWORK



The Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse provides support to member states to build the systems necessary for collecting reliable data on drug abuse to inform policy and action. GAP had initiated its activities in Central Asia in 2001 with support to the countries in conducting “assessment of problem drug use in Central Asia”. For the last three years

drug users) in selected cities in the region. The focal persons, who collect the indicator data, also form part of the regional network – CARDIN (Central Asian Regional Drug Information Network) who meet annually to share information on drug abuse trends and experiences in data management. The 3rd Annual Review meeting of the regional drug abuse information network

GAP has been supporting implementation of 2 key epidemiological indicators – drug abuse treatment demand and HIV infections (especially among injecting

(CARDIN) was held on 14-16 March 2006 in Tashkent. The meeting’s participants included the designated national focal points, representatives of the Ministry of Health, Republican Narcology Centres and National Drug Control Agencies from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. This meeting also included participants from Pakistan represented by national focal person from the Anti Narcotics Force and the UNODC Programme Officer from Islamabad. During the meeting, the participants presented an overview of the drug abuse and HIV/AIDS situation in their respective countries and provided further information on setting up local and national information networks to monitor the drug abuse situation.

IMPROVING BORDER CONTROLS AT HAYRATON

In Uzbekistan, UNODC has been active in improving border controls at the Hayraton ‘Friendship Bridge’ check point, which is a major transport connection between Central Asia and Afghanistan and creates benefits for both sides. With a view to maximizing the positive effect of trade there, UNODC has been concerned with minimizing the negative effects that increased drug trafficking through the point could create. UNODC had therefore been providing specialized equipment including weighbridge, video surveillance systems, mobile radar for controlling border

area adjacent to the checkpoint and training Uzbek Customs and Border Guard offices at the crossing. In addition, following the approval from the Government of Afghanistan on cabling works at Afghan side of the border, cross-border communication between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan was established in

March 2006. As a result, the checkpoint became fully equipped and operational.



COMPUTER BASED TRAINING CENTER IS ESTABLISHED AT DCA OF TAJKISTAN



The opening ceremony of the computer based interactive training center was held on 20 February at the Tajik Drug

Control Agency (DCA). The Center was established with the direct support of UNODC under its regional computer based

law enforcement training project aimed at enhancing Governments' capacities to develop and implement self-sustaining training programs to counter drug trafficking, money laundering and related cross-border criminal activity. The Head of the Tajik DCA Gen. Nazarov as well as representative of UNODC ROCA and the German BKA criminal police took part in the ceremony.

UNODC HELPS TO IMPROVE LAW ENFORCEMENT INFORMATION ANALYSIS AND EXCHANGE

UNODC continued to provide assistance to Central Asian law enforcement agencies to improve their information analysis and exchange capacity through the "Drug law enforcement systems for intelligence, information and data collection, analysis and exchange" regional project. In February 2006, UNODC provided computer equipment, Tais Ontos intelligence analysis software as well as specialized training on "Intelligence Cycle" to the law enforcement agencies of Turkmenistan. In addition, a technical monitoring on Tais Ontos

software use and functionality was provided at all Kyrgyz law enforcement agencies already using this software in intelligence data analysis. In 2003, the same systems were provided to the law enforcement agencies of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. International consultants from Sweden visited the law enforcement agencies of Tajikistan in order to assess the current analytical level and the use of Tais Ontos software and plan future training within the F23 project's POLINT-2 component which is implemented jointly with EU CADAP programme.

To expand these activities and create grounds for future cooperation, the project staff visited Astana, Kazakhstan to discuss plans for the installation of Tais Ontos hard and software. UNODC firmly believes that the unification and harmonization of intelligence data analysis would create solid grounds for successful joint operational activities among law enforcement agencies of Central Asian states and would further complement ongoing cooperation efforts within CARICC activities and controlled deliveries project.

BUILDING CAPACITY TO PREVENT DRUG-ABUSE



Two workshops on “Prevention of Drug Abuse and Promotion of Health and Well-being of Children and Young People” were held for government officials on 20-21 February 2006 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and on 23 - 24 February 2006 in Astana, Kazakhstan. Representatives

from the key ministries, government organizations as well as stakeholders were trained on the basic principles of drug abuse prevention. Facilitated by Mr. Jeffrey Lee, Director of the “Mentor” Foundation, the training was positively evaluated by participants. They also men-

tioned the necessity to continue the training of designated officials responsible for primary prevention and undertake, as the second practical step, the development of national prevention strategy/campaigns. Around 30 government officials from each country took part in the workshops. The workshop in Bishkek was organized jointly with the Prime Minister’s office of the Kyrgyz Republic, while in Astana it was organized in cooperation with the Drug Control Committee under the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Kazakhstan. UNODC is planning to conduct similar workshops for Uzbek and Tajik government officials in April, 2006.

UNODC AND OSCE TRAIN TURKMEN CUSTOMS AND BORDER GUARDS

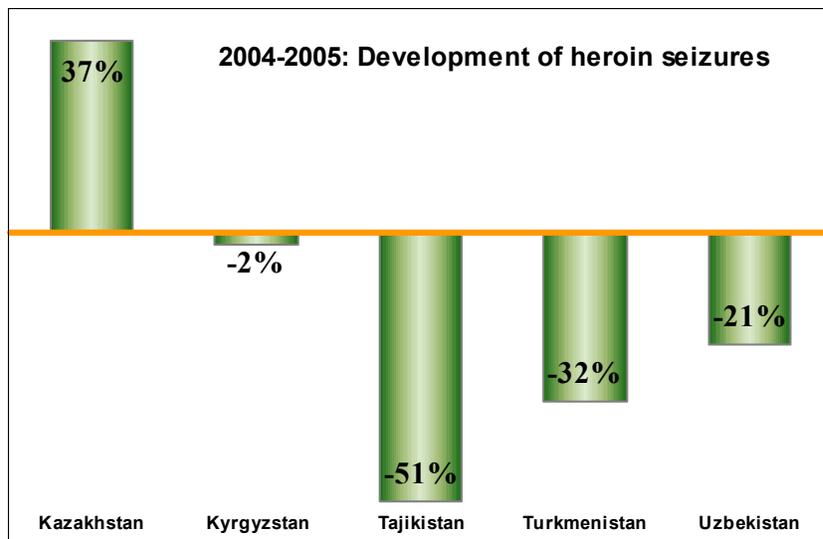
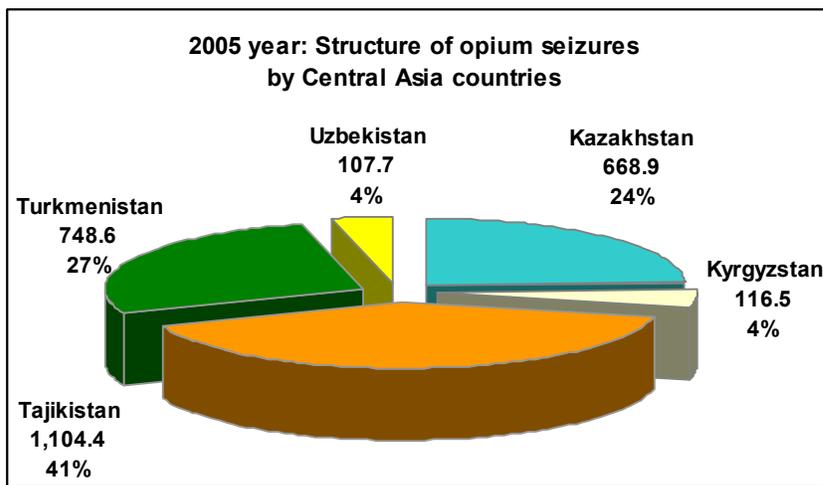
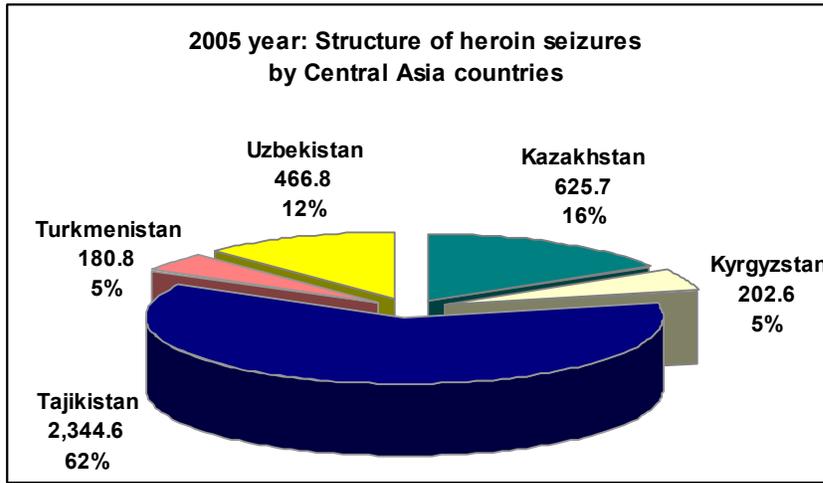
During 15 -22 February 2006, customs officials and border guards of Turkmenistan took part in training courses on intercepting illicit drugs, organized by UNODC ROCA jointly with the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat. The week-long courses were conducted by two German Customs Service experts, and included classroom exercises as well as hands-on training on railway carriages and a vessel in the Turkmenbashi sea port. Par-



ticipants learned about ways of finding concealed drugs in railway cars, containers and vessels using the latest search techniques and equipment. They will also be able to train other personnel deployed at border

crossing-points. The OSCE Centre in Ashgabat and the UNODC ROCA plan to continue their close co-operation in the field of combating drugs and are developing a training course on border management.

REGIONAL DRUG SITUATION ANALYSIS



TOTAL SEIZURES

According to UNODC estimates and government reports, Central Asia (CA) continues to be used as a main transit route for Afghan heroin. Political events in CA have had an effect on opiates seizures in 2005, with total CA seizures amounting to 6.57 tons, including 3.82 of heroin and 2.75 tons of opium with a decrease of 40% and 32% respectively.

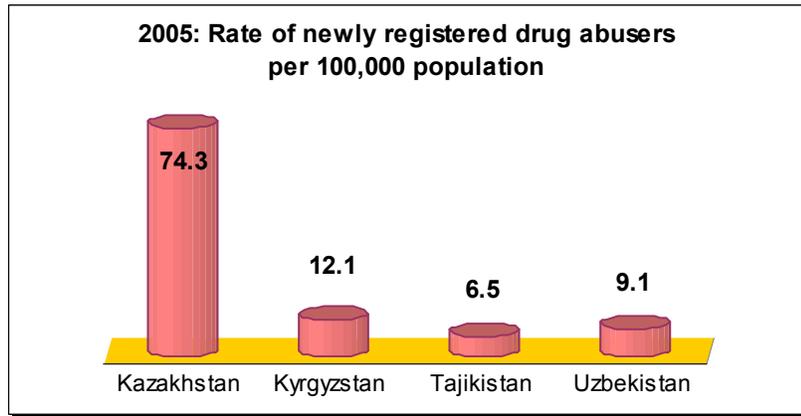
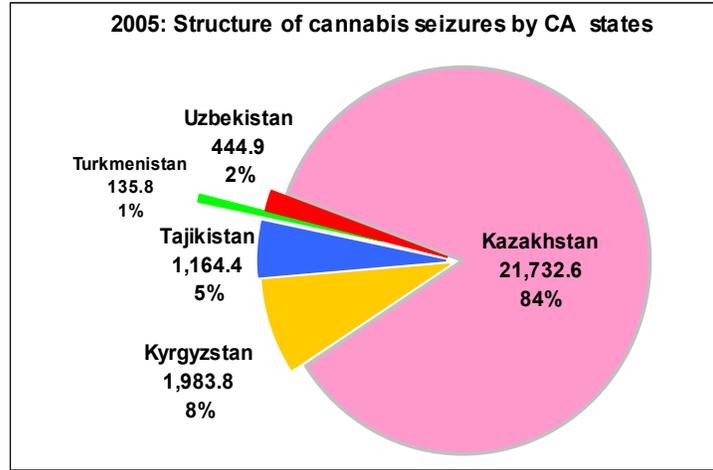
OPIATES SEIZURES

Tajikistan ranks fourth in the world for quantity of heroin seizures. In 2005, 2,344.6 kg heroin were seized in Tajikistan but with 51% decrease. According to the Tajik Government, the main causes for the decrease were the absence of seizures by Russian border guards due to their phased withdrawal from the Tajik-Afghan border which was finalized in 2005. At the same time, the amount of seizures by Tajik law enforcement bodies increased by 7%, the number of arrested drug smugglers from Afghanistan increased from 20 to 62, and interdiction of drug trafficking groups also increased by 31%.

Opiates seizures show a decrease in all countries except Kazakhstan (37% increase in heroin and 90% in opium). In opium, Turkmenistan reported a 12% increase.

CANNABIS GROUP SEIZURES

The cannabis group is still the most frequently seized substance in terms of unit equivalents accounting for 72% of all seizures. Kazakhstan continues to report the largest amount of seizures (21.7 tons, 84% of total seizures). Seizures in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan were stable and Tajikistan reported a 25% increase. Kyrgyzstan being second in cannabis seizures reported 7% less than in 2004.



DRUG ABUSERS

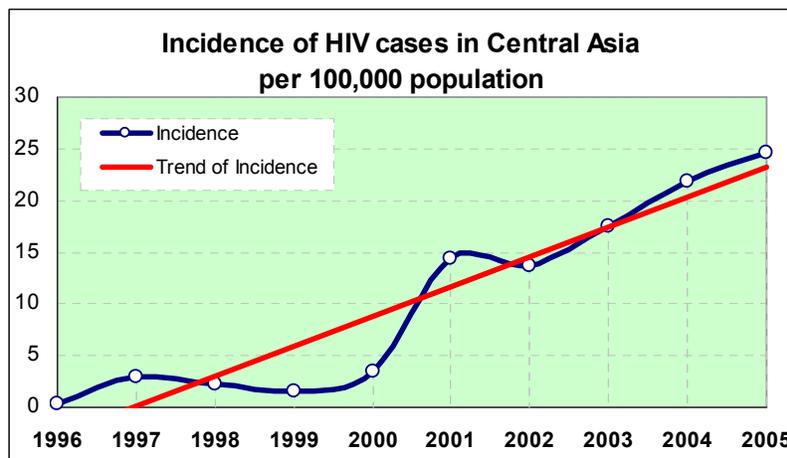
Drug addiction continues to increase in CA countries, likely due to the large amount of heroin and opium transiting through CA. In 2005, 88,837 drug users in CA (81,594 in 2004) were registered. A dynamic of increase is evident in all countries of the region. If the rate of registered drug users was 250 per 100,000 of population in 1996, this has consistently increased to 696 per 100,000 of population in 2005. Heroin is ranked as the first drug of abuse, followed up Cannabis and Opium. Kazakhstan has the highest rate in total (367 per 100,000) and newly registered drug users (74 per 100,000).

HIV/AIDS

Concurrently with the increased use of the “northern route” by traffickers, all Central Asian countries have shown increases in HIV rates over

the last decade and this trend is expected to continue. The transiting of Heroin through Central Asia creates a local demand and a rise in injecting drug use which is main transmission route for HIV in the region.

Central Asia is facing an HIV epidemic fueled by injecting drug use and the spread of the virus among vulnerable population groups. The highest rates were recorded in Kazakhstan where since 2000, a six-fold increase is observed; while in Uzbekistan a phenomenal 8-fold growth has been recorded since 2001. These numbers only account for registered HIV/AIDS cases; the actual figures may be much higher.



PROJECTS

UNODC, OPEC FUND LAUNCH \$4 MILLION HIV/AIDS PREVENTION PROJECT IN CENTRAL ASIA

UNODC and the OPEC Fund for International Development are launching a four million dollar project to improve HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment among drug users and prisoners in the five Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan. UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa and OPEC Fund Director-General Suleiman J. Al-Herbish signed an agreement on 9 April launching a project entitled "Effective HIV/AIDS prevention and care among vulnerable populations in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan." The UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia James Callahan also attended the signing ceremony.

Mr. Costa noted that compared with other regions in the world, Central Asia is experiencing the fastest growth in HIV/AIDS, mainly among injecting drug users and in prison populations. In addition, he further emphasized that this project can help prevent a major HIV/AIDS epidemic in the region and hoped that it will serve as a model for other regions. HIV/AIDS specialists from UNODC will help governments to develop comprehensive national prevention and care programmes among drug users and prisoners. This new project brings the volume of UNODC's demand reduction/HIV portfolio in Central Asia to more than \$7 million.



UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime



NEW PROJECTS

In March, UNODC has launched two drug control law enforcement projects. The "Drug control at airports" regional project is fully funded by European Union and will reinforce drug control capacities at main airports in Central Asia by establishing drug profiling units in order to reinforce searching capacities in each airport.

Another national project is focused on immediate assistance to Turkmenistan for the strengthening of activities at Imam-Nazar checkpoint at the Turkmen-Afghan border. Imam-Nazar is one of the most important border crossings between Turkmenistan and Afghanistan and it is confronted with an increasing stream of cargo and passengers, but there are inadequate facilities, limited technical equipment and a lack of professional training available to Customs Officers and Border Guards. This project aims at a significant improvement of interdiction capacities against illicit trafficking across the Afghan-Turkmen border.

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