



Milestones

July, 2009

Regional Office for Central Asia



“DRUG CONTROL IS NOT JUST ABOUT SECURITY...”

Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of UNODC

A press conference on the occasion of 26 June – International Day against Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking as well as the launch of the 2009 World Drug Report – was organized by the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia.

Mr. Callahan, UNODC Regional Representative, and Mr. Mukhamedov, Director of the National Information Analytical Centre on Drug Control under the Cabinet of Ministries of Uzbekistan provided an overview of the drug situation in Central Asia, particularly in Uzbekistan, as well as the Governments’ effort to combat drug trafficking.

On April 7th, World Health Day, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

launched its global campaign against drugs. "Drug control is not just about security, it's about health. Drug dependence is an illness, and should be prevented and treated as such", said the Executive Director of the UNODC, Antonio Maria Costa.

UNODC's 2009 campaign with the slogan "Do drugs control your life?" is being targeted at young people in order to encourage them to take care of their health and empower them not to take drugs. "Some people are pro-drugs, we are pro-health", said Mr. Costa.

Around 200 million people take drugs at least once a year. Of these, 25 million are regarded as drug dependent. Every year 200,000 people die from drug-





related illnesses.

Young people are more susceptible to drug use. Prevalence of drug use among young people is more than twice as high as drug use among the general population; three times as high in the case of cannabis use. "Much more needs to be done to provide young people with the skills, information and opportunities to lead healthy and fulfilling lives", said Mr. Costa.

The young are also more vulnerable to the effects of drug use. Because their brains are still developing, by taking drugs they are more at risk of memory loss, behavioral problems and even psychosis.

"There is a lot of talk about legalizing drugs to stop crime. But making drugs more readily available would create a public health disaster and condemn a proportion of every generation to addiction", said Mr. Costa. "Governments do not need to choose between public health and public security - they should do both." He urged governments to devote more resources to improve drug prevention, as well as for drug dependence treatment, care and reintegration into society.



HEADS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES DISCUSS COOPERATION

Mr. James Callahan, UNODC Regional Representative, on behalf of Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, UNODC Executive Director, attended the Conference of the Heads of Law Enforcement Agencies

of the "Organization of the Islamic Conference" on which took place in Baku on 21-22 April. During the conference Mr. Callahan informed participants about the main thematic areas covered by UNODC including human trafficking, money laundering, law enforcement capacity building, countering illicit drug and precursor trafficking, and drug demand reduction. Mr. Callahan also discussed the current situation regarding Afghan opiate trafficking. The conference culminated in the adoption of the Baku Declaration which, among other things, emphasized the states determination to increase coordination activities to counter all forms of crime including illicit trafficking of narcotics, precursors, firearms and persons.

Additionally, Mr. Callahan conducted bilateral meetings with the Ministry of Security, Customs Agency, and the Ministry of the Interior, among others, to discuss increasing cooperation between UNODC and Azerbaijan. Significant enthusiasm was generated and further coop-



erative project planning is now underway.

UNODC opened a sub-office in Baku in 2007 to implement a regional project on HIV prevention and care for vulnerable populations. Currently, UNODC runs four region counter-narcotics law enforcement projects in which Azerbaijan participates. These projects aim to improve intelligence collection, information management and analytical capacities; establish channels for cooperation and information sharing between law enforcement agencies; and develop new drug law enforcement skills such as controlled delivery techniques. The bilateral meetings conducted with representatives of the Government of Azerbaijan were the first high-level meeting since the opening of the sub-office.



Workshops
Seminars

UNODC/ROCA AND THE SUPREME COURT OF UZBEKISTAN SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



On 15 May 2009, a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation was signed between the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia and the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The Memorandum builds on the existing good working relationships established by UNODC/ROCA with the Supreme Court as a result of technical assistance provided to Uzbek judges within the framework of the Global Legal Assistance Programme. The agreement is designed to deepen cooperation between ROCA and the Supreme Court in strengthening the judicial system through, among other activities, development and delivery of training courses aimed at enhancing judicial integrity and improving

justice administration.

A fair and effective criminal justice system that ensures respect for human rights is a prerequisite for combating crime and for building a society based on the rule of law. Recently, Uzbekistan has undertaken several resolute steps to reform its criminal justice system. On 1 January 2008, *habeas corpus* and related amendments to criminal law came into effect. Under the new law, all decisions to arrest individuals or suspects must be reviewed by a judge, and defendants have the right to legal counsel from the time of arrest. Legislation abolishing the death penalty also took effect on 1 January 2008 and replaced it with prison terms ranging from 20 years to life imprisonment. On 12

December 2008, President Karimov signed legislation on joining the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights on Abolishing the Death Penalty.

The Memorandum is a further step designed to translate into legislative improvements. Enlargement of the librarian pool of the Research Centre under the Supreme Court is one of the commitments of ROCA under this Memorandum. ROCA provided the Research Centre with the UN Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as well as a set of the UN legal instruments and other publications in the field of preventing and combating drugs, organized crime, corruption and terrorism.

OPERATION TARCET: PREVENTING THE SMUGGLING OF PRECURSOR CHEMICALS TO AFGHANISTAN

On 12-13 May 2009, UNODC's Regional Office for Central Asia and the Country Office for Afghanistan convened a High Level Planning Session to launch Operation TARCET II, an anti-trafficking initiative to prevent the smuggling of chemicals to Afghanistan for use in illicit manufacture of heroin

The aim of the session was to build on the successes achieved during Operation TARCET in 2008, review the results, experiences and lessons learned and launch further joint actions for preventing the smuggling of chemicals to Afghanistan. Specific law enforcement actions and timeframes were agreed to and activities are set to will commence shortly. During 2008, activities conducted as part of Operation TARCET resulted in seizures of over 19 tons of acetic anhydride (14

tons in Pakistan, 5 tons in the Islamic Republic of Iran and 0.5 tons in Afghanistan) as well as over 27 tons of other chemicals (6.8 tons of sulphuric acid in Kyrgyzstan, 1.6 tons of acetic acid in Uzbekistan, 16 tons of acetyl chloride in Iran and 3 tons of diverse chemicals in Afghanistan). With UNODC providing the platform for activities, financial support was received from Canada, the European Commission and United States. Technical assistance was provided by France, Germany, Italy, the Russian Federation, Turkey and UNODC/World Customs Organization. The acetic anhydride seized in 2008 is sufficient to produce more than 9 tons of heroin, with a retail value of over US\$600,000,000 on the European drug markets.

The planning session was attended by over 60 delegates from 27 countries, international and regional organizations, including Afghanistan, China, Germany, France, India, the IR of Iran, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States, as well as EC-BOMCA, CARICC, EC, Europol, Interpol, OSCE and WCO.





ALTERNATIVES TO IMPRISONMENT

On 1-3 April, UNODC ROCA in cooperation with the Penal Reform International (PRI) and the Legal Policy Research Centre (LPRC) conducted a regional workshop *“Drugs and HIV: Alternatives to incarceration and access to health care in the criminal justice system”* in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The workshop was held in the framework of UNODC’s RAC-I29 project “Effective HIV prevention, treatment and care among vulnerable populations in Central Asia and Azerbaijan” (2006-2009).

More than 40 participants including senior and middle level officials of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior (Penitentiary System and Police), Supreme Court, Office of Prosecutor General, Ministry of Health, Drug Control Agency, academia and relevant NGOs from six project countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan.

All countries of the region utilize compulsory treatment of alcohol and drug dependence within the penitentiary system and the majority utilize compulsory treatment of drug dependence outside of prisons. The latter is sometimes seen as an alternative

to incarceration, however, its practical application raise legal and human rights concerns. While countries acknowledge the low effectiveness of the currently applied coercive approaches, and further recognize that these systems do not meet international human rights standards, outdated legal frameworks do not allow changes. The workshop was designed to address the above issues and sought to initiate and accelerate the process of criminal justice reform.

The goal of the workshop was three-fold: 1) to initiate a review of the available options of alternatives to incarceration in the six project countries; 2) to discuss current practices of applying legal coercion of offending and non-offending drug users into drug dependence treatment within and outside of criminal justice system, and assess the implications of applying such measures for health, with focus on HIV and related issues; 3) to develop a road-map for criminal justice reform in participating countries including reforming the system of coercive treatment of drug dependence.

As a result of the discussions, the



country groups developed a road map for criminal justice reform with a focus on widening the spectrum of alternatives to incarceration and ensuring the effectiveness of their implementation. The task was based on the premise of crime prevention/prevention of re-offending as the general goal of a functioning criminal justice and penitentiary system. An important conclusion drawn from the countries’ roadmap presentations was that representatives of each of the participating countries were convinced of the necessity of initiating or expanding criminal justice reforms. In general, the countries acknowledged the need for further humanization of criminal legislation to provide for expanded options for alternatives to incarceration including treatment of drug dependence as the alternative.

TREATING DRUG DEPENDENCE

On 29 June-1 July, UNODC ROCA successfully conducted the regional launch of the global project “Treatnet II – Treating drug dependence and its health consequences”. The launch consisted of a workshop organized in Tashkent, Uzbekistan with participants from each Central Asian coun-



try. Participants included national Focal Points, representatives of the Ministry of Health, Drug Control, Drug Dependence Treatment Centres, university research and medical education departments and others.

The launch focused on introducing Treatnet II, its concept, objectives and activities; the UNODC–WHO joint Programme on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care; as well as general principles of drug dependence treatment. New concepts such as minimum standard of quality of care for drug dependence treatment and resource centre-led networks of

drug treatment and other services to provide a continuum of care to drug dependent persons were also introduced. During the workshop, participants agreed upon planning and implementing Regional Training Programmes.

Each participating country made presentations on the current status of their drug dependence treatment and care services. Objectives put forward for the meeting were achieved and included steps and measures identified for adapting the Treatnet principles into national systems of drug dependence treatment and care.



Project activities

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING MECHANISMS: BEST PRACTISES



What are the requirements for States to comply with the obligations of international legal instruments, in particular the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Trafficking in Persons Protocol? What are considered to be best practices for countering human trafficking globally? How can international cooperation between the countries of origin, transit and destination in combination with the development of internal coordination mechanisms be more efficient and effective? These topics and related issues were the focus of the workshop "International and national mechanisms of combating human trafficking and protection of victims of human trafficking" organized on 5-7 May in Tashkent, Uzbekistan by the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia in coordination with the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The workshop was attended by representatives from the law enforcement agencies of Uzbekistan engaged in countering human trafficking such as the Ministry of Interior, Supreme Court, the Prosecutor General's Office and the National Security Service. The workshop gave participants an opportunity to enhance their

knowledge of existing international anti-trafficking in persons instruments and mechanisms, as well as international best practices in the field of fighting human trafficking.

In light of the efforts currently being undertaken by Uzbekistan to provide assistance to victims of human trafficking through the establishment of the country's first rehabilitation centre, special focus was given to international experiences in rendering adequate assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking. Constructive discussion of the importance of international cooperation in countering human trafficking as well as exchange of experiences between international experts and representatives of Uzbekistan law enforcement agencies made this event a successful one.

To support the efforts of the Government of Uzbekistan in combating human trafficking, UNODC has been implementing the project "Strengthening the criminal justice response to human trafficking in Uzbekistan" since early 2008. It aims to provide assistance to the Government in strengthening its criminal justice response to trafficking in persons in line with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementing Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. In pursuing this objective, project activities focus on supporting the government in its efforts to strengthen anti-human trafficking legislation, increasing the capacities of law enforcement and prosecution through training, establishing a human trafficking database and facilitating regional and international cooperation.

AFGHAN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS STUDY PRACTICAL METHODS FOR COMBATING DRUG RELATED CRIME

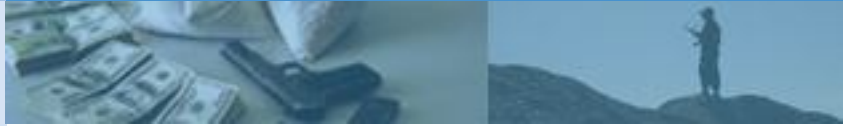
In the framework of the NATO-Russia Council for training Central Asia and Afghan Law Enforcement officers, UNODC convened a workshop for Law Enforcement officers of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan from 20 April-1 May 2009.

The training was lead by trainers from the Turkish Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC) and was the result of cooperation between the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia and the UNODC Country Office in Afghanistan with the participation of the Counter Narcotics Training Academy (CNTA) in Afghanistan.

Over the course of two weeks, mid-level officers of the Ministry of Interior of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan studied both theory and practical methods for combating drug related crime, special investigation techniques and methodology including the detection of clandestine laboratories as well as cooperation with the colleagues abroad. At the end of the course participants were given certificates of achievement.



In the field.
Turkmenistan



UNODC HOLDS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION



The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Project Office in Turkmenistan held a three-day international conference on “Cross-border cooperation between Turkmenistan and neighboring countries” in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan on 24-26 June 2009. The event was organized with the support of the State Drug Control Coordination Commission (SDCCC) and the State Drug Control Service (SDCS) of the Government of Turkmenistan with the participation of more than 70 senior level law enforcement officials from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in addition to distinguished representatives of diplomatic missions located in Ashgabat. Representatives from international organizations including CARICC, CSTO, European House, INTERPOL, OSCE, TIKa,

UNEP, UNHCR, UNRCCA, WCO and WHO also attended the conference.

The Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Hydyr Saparliev delivered a welcome address by the President of Turkmenistan. In this address, the President expressed his appreciation of UNODC’s initiatives in providing assistance in the fight against the spread of narcotics in the region and expressed confidence that the productive work of the conference will stimulate the development and adoption of effective measures to fight drug trafficking.

In his welcoming remarks, Mr. Ercan Saka, UNODC Project Coordinator, underscored UNODC’s role as a facilitator and promoter of cross-border cooperation within its overall strategy for Central Asia. He described a number of projects implemented by UNODC to assist the

Governments in the region and voiced his appreciation of the Government of Turkmenistan’s continued support in this important field.

The conference covered a wide range of issues related to cross border cooperation including its international legal basis and shared national, international and operational initiatives and experience. There was a separate roundtable session on the need for enhanced operational cross-border cooperation with proposed recommendations.

The conference coincided with the national program on the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking (26 June 2009). In celebration, on the third day of the conference, participants were invited to witness the destruction of drugs seized by Turkmen law enforcement agencies.



In the field
Turkmenistan

FIRST CONSULTATION SERVICE FOR DRUG USERS OPENED IN ASHGABAT

The first consultation center for drug users officially opened in Ashgabat on 23 June 2009 during a ceremony with the participation of the Government of Turkmenistan, the diplomatic corps in Ashgabat, OSCE, UNODC and USAID representatives.

UNODC Project Coordinator, Mr. Ercan Saka, said that this is a milestone in the partnership and support of the Government of Turkmenistan to create such a "home" to act as a vehicle to reach and gain the trust of this vulnerable group.

This center aims to provide assistance to drug users and addicts. It was established through the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) CAPACITY project jointly with the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry and UNODC.

This center is located in Bikrova, Ashgabat at the No. 4 Health Center. One of the operational principles of the center is to offer anonymous services free of charge.

Professional healthcare staff, con-

sultants and outreach workers will work with patients on all issues including providing advice on how patients can protect themselves from contracting HIV and other diseases.

In addition, patients will have the chance to enjoy the Center's facilities including watching videos, having coffee and tea, and meeting and communicating with one another. In the future, the center is expected to provide rehabilitation and other relevant services.

DRUG BURNING CEREMONIES

To mark World Drug Day, drug burning ceremonies were held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan and Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

In Turkmenistan, the ceremony was organized by the Government of Turkmenistan on 26 June. In total, 1,195 kg of drugs were destroyed in Kasamly Julge village near Ashgabat. The incinerated drugs had been seized by national law enforcement agencies during special operations.

In Uzbekistan, the ceremony organized by the Government of Uzbekistan was held on 24 June and approximately 1,500 kg were incinerated. Senior UNODC representatives attended the event.

Both events were well attended by members of the diplomatic corps.





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1 July 2009, Kazakhstan

A high level meeting on law enforcement cooperation in fighting organized crime in Central Asia will be held in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

The Senior Legal Adviser will participate in the meeting organized by the OSCE jointly with the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Officials from the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Kazakhstan and law enforcement agencies of the Central Asian countries as well as the OSCE and Interpol are expected to take part.

14 – 18 August 2009, Kazakhstan

A national workshop on implementation of the universal regime against terrorism will be held.

24 August - 12 September 2009, Uzbekistan

A three-week training on treatment of drug dependence using the TREATNET Training Package will be held. International trainers from Sweden, Lithuania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Pakistan and Georgia will provide training on three themes (volumes):

Volume A: Screening, assessment and treatment planning.

Volume B: Elements of psychosocial treatment.

Volume C: Addiction medications and special populations.

4 - 5 November 2009, Kyrgyzstan

A workshop on the implementation of the universal regime against terrorism will be held in cooperation with the OSCE.

30 November – 4 December 2009, Turkmenistan

A workshop will be organized for Central Asian countries on the non-proliferation of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons as well as international legal cooperation against biological, chemical and nuclear terrorism.

IMPROVING NATIONAL LEGISLATION TO ENSURE UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF HIV

On 16 June 2009, a consultative meeting was convened by UNODC ROCA with the support of UNAIDS and in cooperation with the Government of Uzbekistan on “Improving national legislation and mechanisms of its enforcement to ensure universal access to prevention and treatment of HIV in the Republic of Uzbekistan”. The focus of the meeting was presenting and building on the findings of the national legislation analysis to identify legal regulations that promote or impede the right to universal access to services for the prevention and treatment of HIV, with a focus on the rights of drug users and people in prison settings. The meeting provided a platform to discuss the recommendations on legislative amendments which were generated in the course of a legal analysis and agree upon the next steps to initialize the process of legislative amendment.

In his opening speech, Mr. Callahan, UNODC Representative for Central Asia, underscored the importance of human-rights based regulatory frameworks as a prerequisite to achieving universal access to HIV related services, especially as it relates to vulnerable groups. He emphasized

UNODC’s commitment to supporting the country in its move towards universal access to services for prevention and treatment of HIV especially for drug users and those in prisons. In this regard Mr. Callahan stated that UNODC will continue its support for the development of a comprehensive and effective drug dependence treatment system that would use evidence-based methods including opioid substitution treatment.

The sessions covered features of the HIV epidemic in Uzbekistan, the concept of universal access to HIV prevention and treatment and the role of legislation in providing universal access. The highlight of the meeting was the legal analysis presented by Mr. Makhmud Abdukhalikov, independent lawyer and national expert.

As a result of the meeting, it was agreed that a series of consultative meetings are needed to discuss individual blocks of recommendations in depth (i.e. related to drug control, criminal code, penitentiary system, treatment of drug dependence, etc.), and then prioritize the issues to be dealt with in the course of reforming national legislation.

