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THE MISSION OF CARICC IS TO JOIN EFFORTS IN COUNTERING DRUG TRAFFICKING

The Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) is a large-scale project of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Central Asia

For the past decade criminal organizations engaged in drug smuggling have significantly increased the flow of Afghan heroin through the countries of Central Asia. The Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) is to serve as the main regional communication centre for analysis and exchange of information on transnational crime in real time, as well as a centre for the organization and coordination of joint operations. Its activities will increase the efficiency and expand cooperation among law enforcement agencies of member-states with the purpose of preventing and countering illicit drug trafficking and the associated international organized crime.

How CARICC, as one of the largest projects of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Central Asia, currently works and whether it will become the main regional communication centre for analysis and exchange of prompt information as was initially were questions recently put to Lieutenant General Beksultan Sarsekov, the Director of the Centre.

Mr. Sarsekov, what is CARICC today?

Today CARICC is functioning in a pilot phase. Presently Russia is the only country that hasn't signed the CARICC Agreement but we have assurance from the Russian side that the Agreement will be signed shortly. On the other hand, it is pleasure for me to mention that the parliament of Turkmenistan has already ratified the Agreement. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan have informed me that the ratification procedure in their countries has already started. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan also expressed the willingness to start ratification upon receipt of the necessary documents from the depositary, i.e. the MFA of host state, in our case Kazakhstan. Therefore, currently one of our main aims is to facilitate the ratification of the CARICC Agreement by parliaments. The Agreement enters into force when at least four countries ratify it; and then the Centre can be fully staffed and work to its full capacity.

For the moment, taking into account the aggravating situation relating to drug production and its trafficking, UNODC, who implements the project, proposed to start the Centre's ac-

tivities in the framework of a so called "pilot phase" without waiting for the Agreement to enter into force. This proposal was supported by both CARICC member states and donor countries. Taking this opportunity I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the donor countries – Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Turkey, UK, and USA. The pilot phase started on 1st November 2007.

Is there legal basis for CARICC to start full-scale work?

Let us remember that in the framework of CIS, UN and other international and regional organizations, which include also CARICC member states, there is a sufficient number of agreements, treaties and other legal documents that provide a basis for cooperation. Thus there is legal basis for the normal functioning of CARICC.

What is CARICC staff doing at present? For the time being, the Centre consists of only six officers. I would emphasize that all were recruited as a result of an international competi-

The Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre



tive selection process. In the future, CARICC staff members will be subjected to regular checks, including polygraph (lie detector) tests. This is done to ensure that only the most qualified, honest and competent officers are selected for posts in CARICC. If integrity of the personnel is not prioritized, none of the countries will trust the Centre with sensitive information. Any leakage of such information would have serious consequences.

Apart from CARICC staff, there are liaison officers from member states seconded to the Centre. Their mission is to ensure cooperation between CARICC and the competent authorities of each member state. At present there are liaison officers from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan at the Centre.

The major task at this stage is the collecting and analysis of information concerning the drug situation. It is one of the most important and crucial points of our work. We regularly issue information bulletins where we try to provide information on drug seizures in member states, drug trafficking routes, methods of concealment, criminal groups etc. I am pleased to mention that the competent authorities of CARICC member states, as well as our partners from Asia, North America, Europe and Australia are expressing a great interest in these information bulletins. 20 information bulletins were issued in English and Russian languages so far and were sent to more than 500 addressees.

CARICC is also a unique organization. It was established to combine the efforts of all competent authorities that are engaged in counter narcotic activities – Ministries of Internal Affairs, Border Control bodies, Customs, National Security bodies and specialised drug control agencies. It is no secret that, so far, cooperation only existed between similar agencies such as the police of one country with the police of another country, or between border guards. Our task is to make sure that any competent agency can cooperate with any agency in another country if and when needed.

I would not like you to get the impression that the pilot phase means only half capacity operation. We have already achieved actual results. Thus, thanks to collaboration established via the CARICC liaison officers, five drug trafficking channels were identified, drug traffickers were arrested and over 100 kg of heroin was seized. Currently, the UNODC initiated "Operation TARCET" focussing on the illicit trafficking of precursors and chemicals used for heroin manufacture is being coordinated by the centre.



In the near future we are planning multilateral field exercises on controlled delivery in support of another UNODC project. This activity will allow, first of all, the development of coordination mechanisms and, secondly, strengthening collaboration among the competent structures.

What relations do you have with colleagues from international law enforcement organizations?

It is important to realise that CARICC has not been established on the basis of any political, regional or organisational interests which, by definition, would have limited its potential regarding participants and partners. It was established exclusively for the promotion of cooperation and coordination in countering illicit drug trafficking. Any state interested in countering drug trafficking can join the Centre. This is specified in the Agreement on the establishment of CARICC and we are open for new participants.

Liaison officers from China, the United States and some European countries are expressing a keen interest in our activities and we are ready to collaborate with them. Currently, the issue of Afghan involvement, initially with observer status, is under consideration.

We have established good contacts with Interpol, which has installed the I-24/7 system for secure communication and access to the Interpol databases by CARICC. Our officers have therefore direct access to Interpol databases on:

wanted persons, stolen vehicles, stolen and counterfeit travel documents, stolen works of art etc. Interpol is planning to establish a liaison office at CARICC as soon as the Agreement enters into force. A visit to Europol to study their experience is also planned as Europol was used as a model when developing the CARICC institutional documents. Contacts are being established with the World Customs Organization and we are ready to collaborate with other organisations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, CSTO, CIS, Economic Cooperation Organization.

I would like to say in conclusion that, certainly, we are worried by the delays with the signing and ratification of the CARICC Agreement. I cannot recall a single keynote speech of any president of the member-states where the problem of the illicit drug trafficking and associated threats was not touched. Unfortunately, lack of the signed and ratified Agreement hinders CARICC's full-scale operations. However, in spite of these temporary problems and as I have already stated, the Centre is functioning and the information is being collected. Within our limited capacities we are supporting joint operations and establishing active mechanisms for collaboration and coordination among the competent agencies.

We are glad that the CARICC experience is already being used in other regions of the world with the Gulf States deciding to establish a similar centre with CARICC serving as a model.

Head of Russian government Vladimir Putin on CARICC

V. V. Putin: Also in cooperation with the UN and its specialized agency – the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime - draft of one more international agreement has been elaborated. This is about establishing of the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre on fighting illicit drug trafficking. We have taken a decision to join the Centre, taking into account the fact that significant problems of drug trafficking are related to this region. We (Russia) became unfortunately a market for drugs and transit country for drug supply to other countries, first of all to Europe. Therefore the issue is very crucial. I would like you to pay special attention.

7 July 2008 Abstract from the minutes of the government session



Paris Pact Initiative

As an integral part of cross-border cooperation under the Paris Pact Initiative, the first meeting of Senior Law Enforcement Officials of Caspian Sea Initiative Countries was conducted on 24-26 June 2008. The meeting was attended by a total of 75 participants from the Caspian Sea Initiative Countries and select international organizations (Azerbaijan, I.R. of Iran, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation and Turkmenistan, Central Asian Countries, Afghanistan, Turkey, USA, UK, France, WCO, IMO, OSCE, UNEP, ROCA, and the UNODC Iran Office). At the end of the meeting, the participants had agreed on a draft action plan for activities to be taken during the upcoming three years (2008-2010). The draft plans currently being circulated the UNODC, CSI countries, Paris Pact partners.

Compendium on Drug Related Statistics

The Coordination and Analysis Unit was published a Compendium of Drug Related Statistics for Central Asia for the period 1997-2008. This regional compendium covers 11 years on Drug seizures, Illicit Crop Cultivation; Precursors; Drug Prices; Drug Abuse; HIV/AIDS; Crime, etc.

NATO-Russian Council Heads of State agree to make UNODC-implemented Project Permanent



On 14-15 April the donor Nations and the UNODC held an expert meeting on counter-narcotics training techniques and methodologies. Senior counter-narcotics experts and UNODC officials gathered in Brussels to review the NRC Project on Counter-Narcotics Training of Afghan and Central Asian Personnel activities and to plan and coordinate the Project's training courses, curricula, an overall strategy for the coming years.

Lessons learned from courses in the previous two years were examined. The recommendations of an independent evaluation commissioned by the UNODC, as well as the results from the two high-level steering sessions held with the Project beneficiary countries in 2006 and 2007 were also considered. The overall purpose of the meeting was to ensure that the Project responds most effectively to the beneficiary countries' counter-narcotics training needs, as the Project's post-pilot phase evolves. The meeting welcomed the Project's newest contributor, Bulgaria, which became the Project's 17th donor. To date, 419 trainees from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have been trained through this NRC initiative. Russian Foreign Minister S.V. Lavrov commented at the NRC Summit that the project, implemented by UNODC's Regional Office for Central Asia, is "developing very well."

FAN C meeting

13th Meeting of the Foreign Anti-Narcotics Community (FAN C) for Central Asia and in the 2nd Operation TARCET OCU Coordination Meeting were conducted in Almaty on 28-30 April 2008.

Following the launch of Operation TARCET in Central Asia in March 2008, it was decided that E29 Project Staff should visit as many operational sites as possible in order to assess implementation at these points. Thus, on 7-9 April 2008, the Senior Law Enforcement Advisor and Regional Coordinator of UNODC ROCA visited the Ninjy-Pandj border checkpoint to assess the implementation of Operation TARCET. The mission was planned to coincide with a visit of the Vice-President of the German Federal Police (BKA), Mr. Falke, to Tajikistan as Germany is the international partner for Tajik authorities. The subsequent mission to the Khorgos border checkpoint on the Kazakh-China border proceeded on 30 April 2008. Missions to the border checkpoints (BCPs) in Dostyk, Osh in the southern part of Kyrgyzstan and to Ak-Tilek, Ak-Jol and Alamedin on the Kyrgyz-Kazak borders were undertaken between 12 and 15 May 2008. During the missions, discussions were held with operational staff and briefings on the finds of the operation were made to participating authorities. Additionally, training was provided on the use of the precursor testing kits.



Satellite Session at the HIV/AIDS Conference in Moscow



Second Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference

3-5 May 2008, Moscow

Accelerating Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment and Care for All

The Second Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference (EECAAC) took place in Moscow, Russia, on 3-5 May 2008. The conference invited more than 2000 people and provided unprecedented opportunity for dialogue and interaction among political and community leaders, scientists and other researchers, people living with HIV and representatives of civil society from across the region in response to the challenges of the AIDS crisis. *Accelerating Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment and Care for All* was adopted as the official motto of the conference.

The Satellite Session on the topic "Towards the Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support: Overcoming Legal Barriers" was organized jointly by UNODC ROCA and the Legal Clinic *Adilet* (a renowned NGO from Kyrgyzstan) with the aim to present results of the legislation analysis related to the access to HIV services for injecting drug users (IDU's) and prison inmates, and proposed amendments to national laws and bylaws. The analysis was made in the frame of the UNODC-supported project "Effective HIV Prevention and Care among



Vulnerable Populations in Central Asia and Azerbaijan (2006-2010). The satellite session was chaired by Mr. Mirzakhid Sultanov, HIV/AIDS Regional Advisor, and Mr. Eric Iriskulbekov, Project Coordinator, *Adilet*. Ms. Nina Kerimi, UNODC Project Coordinator made the first presentation describing the project outline, its concept, operational modalities and key achievements. It was followed by the UNODC international consultant Ms. Leah Utyasheva's communication on the summary of the results of legislation analyses in six project countries and suggested recommendations for elaboration of national legislations. National experts, representa-

tives of the expert groups, who actually made these analyses gave their comments on particularities of the work in their respective countries. About 60 people were present at the satellite, mostly members of the official national delegations from Central Asian countries, and those involved in development assistance in Central Asia (UN and other international and bilateral organizations). Participants of the session were highly interested in the topics discussed; many of them were looking forward to the availability of the final report of the legal analyses.

Prepared by: Akmal Rustamov with support from Nina Kerimi

UNODC helps to build capacity in prison settings to counter HIV/AIDS in Uzbekistan



UNODC/ROCA jointly with The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Project and AIDS Foundation East-West (AFEW) supported the Directorate General for Execution of Punishments (GUIN) under the Ministry of Interior of Uzbekistan in training of medical staff of prison settings on antiretroviral therapy (ARVT).



ARV therapy has begun in the pilot correctional settings in 2007. However, due to lack of trained personnel it was not possible to scale up ARV in other prison settings. On May 27-31, 2008 as a result of this partnership, 24 employees of GUIN went through a 5-days training course on *Initiation of ARV therapy among adults in correctional settings* conduct-

ed in Kiev (Ukraine) by the Regional Knowledge Hub for Treatment and Care on HIV/AIDS in Eurasia and with technical guidance from American International Health Alliance (AIHA). The participants of this course gained a good knowledge and skills on ARV therapy, and methods of work focusing on particular target group, inmates.

The feedback from trainers was positive in regard to the composition of group and their active participation. UNODC will continue close collaboration with the Ministry of Interior in the future and will provide technical support to the management of correctional institutions in their efforts to counter HIV/AIDS among prisoners.

Prevention of human trafficking

Seminar “Countering human trafficking in the Republic of Uzbekistan” was held on 30-31 May in Tashkent.

The seminar was organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Central Asia with support of the Uzbek government.

The seminar was directed at further improving national legislation, strengthening interaction of state structures and non-governmental organizations in Uzbekistan in the field of fight human trafficking, and studying international experience in this sphere.

Among participants were representatives of the Ministry of Internal Relations, National Security Service, Prosecutor General Office, Ministry of Justice, Legislative Chamber of Oliy Majlis, National Human Rights Center of Uzbekistan and local NGOs. Representatives of International Organization for Mi-

gration (Mission in Kazakhstan), UNODC headquarters and department of fighting human trafficking (Vienna) and other international organizations accredited in Uzbekistan took part in the workshop.

During the seminar participants had the opportunity to discuss the establishment of a permanent mechanism for cooperation among state structures, law enforcement bodies and non-governmental organizations in the field of countering human trafficking.

Special attention was paid to acquainting participants with international experience, existing legal instruments of the UN and developing recommendations for strengthening the national legal base to effectively combat human trafficking. The UN Conven-

tion against Transnational Organized Crime was signed by Uzbekistan on 13 December 2000 and ratified on 9 December 2003. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children supplementing this Convention, was signed by Uzbekistan on 28 June 2001 and ratified on 8 July 2008. The law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On countering human trafficking” was adopted on 17 April 2008.

The seminar was held in the framework of UNODC Project “Improvement of criminal justice system in the field of fighting illegal human trafficking in Uzbekistan” which was approved by the Uzbek government in 2007 and is currently being realized.

Strengthening national legislation

A project to strengthen the criminal justice response to human trafficking is underway in Uzbekistan with support from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Project activities are primarily focused on strengthening national anti-human trafficking legislation and supporting law enforcement and prosecution capacities.

Over the last decades, drug trafficking and related organized crime in the region bordering on Afghanistan have spawned other forms of crime including trafficking in humans. Organized criminal groups have taken advantage of this, turning trafficking into lucrative and low risk business. The Government of Uzbekistan is increasingly demonstrating a commitment to confront this form of criminality and recently ratified the Protocol, to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Now, legislation must be made compliant with the international protocols - and the justice system provided with the tools to target traffickers and safeguard victims.

In an attempt to address these needs, UNODC’s project aims to strengthen national legislation, enhance counter-trafficking policies, strengthen national and international inter-agency cooperation, improve data collection and analysis, and enhance relevant expertise within the law enforcement and prosecution sectors through training.

The UNODC Regional Representative for Central Asia, Mr. James Callahan, notes that, “The Government approached UNODC more than a year ago to request we assist them in their efforts to address trafficking of its citizens. Although it has taken some time to secure funding, I am pleased that the project is now well underway, and would like to thank the Governments of Finland, Norway and Sweden for their support to the project.”

An assessment of existing anti-trafficking legislation and the criminal justice response to trafficking is already underway. The findings will go toward recommending ways of improving the country’s legal framework. A workshop to support the development of a national strategy to fight human trafficking was also held in May 2008.

At the end of the workshop participants agreed upon number of steps to be taken by the Government in the field of countering human trafficking. These included further bringing na-



tional legislation in compliance with international legal instruments, improving the mechanism for inter-agency information exchange between competent authorities of the country, elaborating legal and practical mechanisms of cooperation with countries of transit and destination and strengthening cooperation between state agencies and non-governmental organizations in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

A key component of the project will be the establishment of a national database within the existing anti-trafficking unit in the Ministry of Interior, and subsequent training on its use in all 12 provinces of the country and Republic of Karakalpakstan. Another activity will be training of police officers, prosecutors and judges across the country on different practical aspects of combating human trafficking. Finally, the project will also aim to strengthen cooperation with other countries and encourage the signing of bilateral agreements on extradition and mutual legal assistance.



LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS DISCUSSED HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS



The workshop «Promoting Law Enforcement and Judicial Co-operation among Source, Transit and Destination Countries to Combat Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling to and from Central Asia» was held in Tashkent in May. About 70 participants, representing law enforcement, migration, judicial authorities and/or NGOs from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, the Russian Federation, Israel, Turkey, UAE, UK and USA as well as senior experts of the IOM, UNODC, OSCE (including ODIHR), UNHCR, UNICEF and CSTO took part in the workshop.

The workshop - jointly organized by UNODC and OSCE - served as a forum for strengthening cooperation among prosecutors, law enforcement and migration officers from five countries of Central Asia and their counterparts from the destination countries, i.e. the Russian Federation, Israel, United Arab Emirates, and Thailand, to effectively investigate transnational offences on human trafficking and smuggling of migrants. The participants were given an opportunity to learn about the UN legal instruments and best practices in these areas, and to discuss the actual casework practice of each participating country, including USA. The workshop also facilitated the establishment of the direct contacts between the law enforcement officers and the NGOs from the source, transit and destination countries which provided assistance to the victims of human trafficking. The UNODC and OSCE working tools and practical manuals in the areas of prevention and combating human trafficking and smuggling of migrants - translated into the Russian language - were given to the participants in both electronic and hard copies. The participants gave a high evaluation of the workshop having stressed its practical value and usefulness.

DESTRUCTION OF A PRISON IN TURKMENISTAN



On 25 June 2008, the Government of Turkmenistan held a ceremony for the demolition of a 60-year-old prison located at Turkmenbashi city on the Caspian Sea coast. During the ceremony, the authorities said that the prison was used for serious criminals and the current ongoing justice reform and decrease in crime in the country led the government to demolish antiquated facilities.



The first symbolic blow was made by Mr. James Callahan, the UNODC Regional Representative before the whole building was destroyed. Mr. Callahan thanked the Minister of the Interior and Mr. Murad Islamov, head of State Drug Control Service for extending the invitation to the UNODC to attend the historical event and highlighted that it was another concrete example of the ongoing social and democratic reform package under the guidance of the president of Turkmenistan.

The ceremony was also attended by representatives of national agencies and ministries, the diplomatic corps, participants of the Caspian Sea Initiative meeting and other guests.

ENHANCED COOPERATION IN ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS



Specialized training for Kyrgyz Customs officers was organized in Bishkek upon the request of the Kyrgyz Customs under the NATO-Russia Council project implemented by UNODC. The training was provided through a combined effort between different agencies and countries during the 10-day course. 26 officers were trained by the instructors of DEA (the US), Russian Federal Drug Control Service and Russian Federal Customs Service.

Training helped to establish and promote professional and personal relationships which will further serve to enhance cooperation and assistance between the participants in enforcement operations as well as enhance relations and cooperation between DEA, FDCCS and their counterpart organizations.

The participants indicated that the various investigative and tactical methods and exercises discussed during the seminar would be utilized in the field to the extent applicable by Kyrgyz laws and their agency's policies and procedures.



TAJIK DRUG CONTROL AGENCY REPORTS LARGE HEROIN HAUL

Officers from the Tajik Drug Control Agency (one of UNODC projects) seized 423 kilograms of drugs on the Dushanbe–Khudjand transport corridor, part of the Northern Route for drug smuggling from Afghanistan through Central Asia. The high purity heroin, presumably destined for European markets, was found hidden in an empty KAMAZ truck. The appraised value of confiscated drugs is approximately 400,000 US dollars.



Introductory Workshop for Mobile Deployment Team Officers

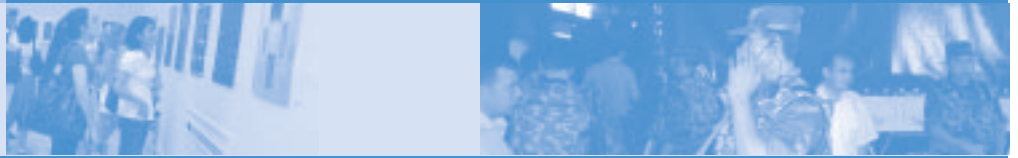
UNODC conducted introductory workshop on operative search activities for the newly established Mobile Deployment Team at the Anti-drug Smuggling Department of the Ministry of Interior of the Tajikistan. Experts from the UNODC, DCA and Russian Border Guards shared experience in operational search activities along the border areas. Border control, corruption prevention, description of drugs and precursor and intelligence analysis topics were in the focus. Positive and negative experience, of the DCA and the RFBG were exchanged as well as methods of informant recruitment and possible incentives for informant. Measures for corruption prevention and corruption risk analysis key theme were throughout the workshop.



Intelligence Analysis Training for Border Forces

20 officers from the Tajik Border Forces were trained during Intelligence Analysis workshop organized by UNODC on 28-30 April in Dushanbe.. How to organize an information-analytical activities in the Border Forces, what are main principles and criteria of effectiveness of information-analytical activities and its assessment; current, perspective and target planning of analytical activities; how to forecast situation development on the border, data collection and information analysis methods were discussed during the training. The main goal of the workshop was to strengthen border control related investigative and intelligence analysis capacities of border guards at selected areas of the Tajik-Afghan border.

Contents,
exhibitions,
media events



UN IN UZBEKISTAN NAMES WINNERS OF POSTER CONTEST



This contest was co-sponsored by the National Academy of arts, UNODC and UNDP and aimed to stimulate the interest of young Uzbek graphic designers to poster art. An international jury took on the difficult task of choosing the best works from over a hundred posters all featuring UN contributions to human development in different styles and techniques.

The first prize was awarded to Artur Khan, for the poster titled "Fill in life with color". The second prize was shared by Alexander Barkovskiy for series of posters on human development and Makhbuba Bakhramova for the poster titled "...Was very young". The third prize was awarded to Kamila Galirskaya for the poster titled "In captivity" from her series of posters on AIDS and drug abuse.



UNODC Report Warns that Progress in Drug Control is under Threat



A press conference devoted to the launch of the World Drug Report was held in the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia in Tashkent on the International Day against Drug

Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking. Journalists also attended drug burning ceremony organized by the Uzbek Security Service jointly with Drug Control Committee.



A presentation made by the Mr. Callahan, UNODC Regional Representative, on the main finding of the World Drug Report 2008 revealed that the recent stabilization in the world drugs market is under threat. A surge in opium and coca cultivation and the risk of higher drug use in developing countries threaten to undermine recent progress in drug control. The report also revealed that less than one in twenty people (age 15-64) have tried drugs at least once in the past 12 months. Problem drug users (people with severe drug dependence) are less than one tenth of this already low percentage: 26 million people, about 0.6 per cent of the planet's adult population. Mr. Dusmetov, Chief of the Uzbek National Drug Control Center made presentation on the drug situation in Uzbekistan focusing on supply and demand reduction.