

5.5: International and Regional Counternarcotics Initiatives - Afghanistan

Summary

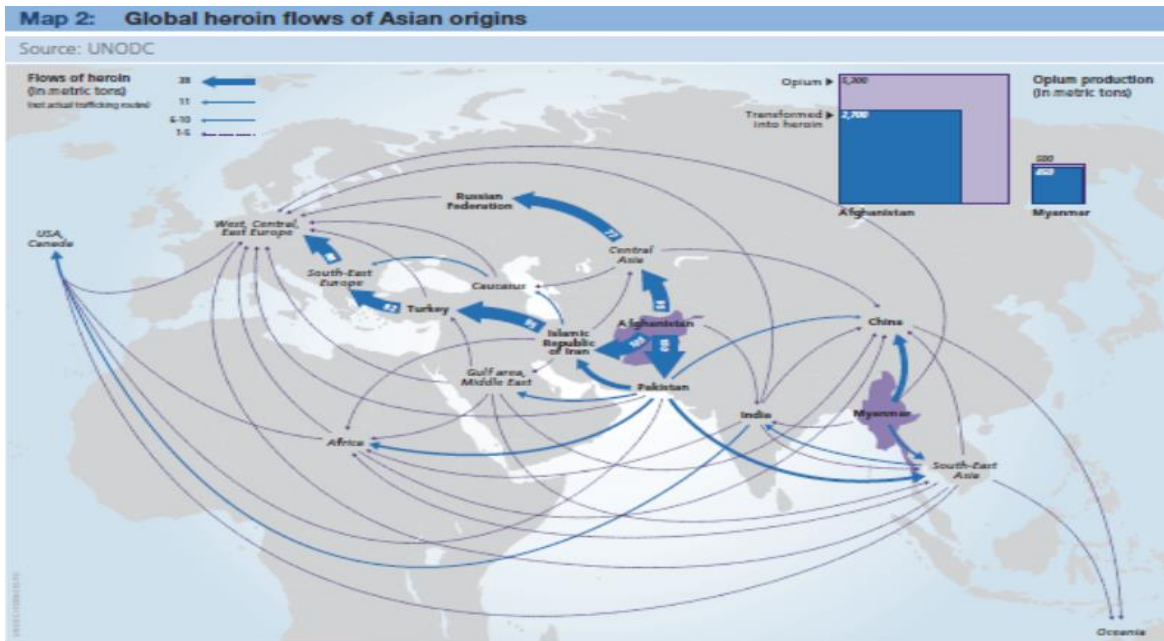
This chapter provides an overview of the international and regional initiatives to combat narcotics trafficking from Afghanistan including:

- A. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNDOC's) Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries 2011-2014;
- B. The Paris Pact Initiative;
- C. The Triangular Initiative;
- D. The International Narcotics Control Board Initiatives;
- E. The Central Asian Regional and Information Coordination Centre;
- F. The Global Container Control Programme;
- G. The Northern Route Working Group;
- H. The Central Asia Counternarcotics Initiative;
- I. The Istanbul Process; and
- J. The NATO-Russia Council.

Introduction

Drug trafficking has a global impact. “The flow [of drugs] link regions and continents, sometimes with dramatic consequences for the countries they affect.”¹ Countries have recognized the shared responsibility in the fight against drug trafficking. That shared responsibility is expressed in national, regional, and international initiatives to combat illicit drugs. As the major supplier of the world's opium supply, Afghanistan is a central factor in all initiatives. This chapter provides an overview of the international and regional initiatives to combat narcotics trafficking from Afghanistan.

¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), World Drug Report 2012, p. iii:
http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/WDR2012/WDR_2012_web_small.pdf.



Source: UNODC World Drug Report 2010

The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries

The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries 2011-2014 (Regional Programme) encompasses UNODC's support to anti-drug trafficking efforts in the countries of Central Asia including Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.² The Regional Programme is intended to "provide a platform under which the shared responsibility between the countries in the region . . . and the international community can be strategically planned and implemented as recommended by several" resolutions from the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the UN Security Council.³ The Regional Programme sets forth a number of goals aimed at increasing the capacity of the countries to combat drug trafficking.⁴

Goals of the Regional Programme include increasing border controls and information sharing amongst the countries of the region. By initiating frameworks and fora for cooperation, these countries can improve their ability to monitor their respective borders, as well as share vital information which will mutually support border control efforts. The Regional Programme also seeks to increase use of evidence-based, joint investigations, as well as the use of forensic evidence. In particular, the Regional Programme will include promulgating regional standards and standard operating procedures in order to encourage

² UNODC, Drug-Trafficking, Central Asia: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-trafficking/central-asia.html>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

improvements in national capacities and facilitate more effective international cooperation.⁵

Current projects under the Regional Programme are concentrated on “supporting the most vulnerable border areas against the trafficking of Afghan drugs.”⁶ Mobile Interdiction Teams (MOBITs) have been created, which provide a flexible solution to guard long, rugged borders.⁷ UNODC is also working to strengthen ports of entry along the Afghan-borders with Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.⁸ Through the Regional Programme, “UNODC takes the recommendations of the Rainbow Strategy most relevant to its mandate and integrates them into a time-bound, pragmatic, and comprehensive programme with a clear monitoring mechanism. UNODC intends that the Paris Pact high-level meetings will continue to serve as the overarching forum and mechanism for political discussion, consultation, and priority setting on the issues concerning the Regional Programme.”⁹ The Paris Pact Initiative and the Rainbow Strategy are discussed below.

Paris Pact Initiative

The Paris Pact Initiative “represents a determined attempt by the international community to tackle the threat posed by the illicit production of opium in Afghanistan, in a spirit of partnership and cooperation.”¹⁰ The Paris Pact Initiative, led by UNODC, is a technical assistance project consisting of three main components:¹¹

- A two-pronged **Consultative Mechanism** that facilitates periodical consultations at the expert and policy level between partners, in order to jointly discuss, identify and set in motion concrete measures to stem the increasing level of opiates trafficked from Afghanistan.
- The **Automated Donor Assistance Mechanism** (ADAM), an internet-based tool which provides Paris Pact partners with essential information to coordinate counter narcotics technical assistance in countries along the main opium trafficking routes from Afghanistan.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ UNODC, Central Asia, Drug Trafficking and Border Control: <http://www.unodc.org/centralasia/en/drug-trafficking-and-border-control.html>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ See Ibid, Ongoing Projects: <http://www.unodc.org/centralasia/en/ongoing-projects/drug-trafficking-and-border-control.html>.

⁹ UNODC, Paris Pact Initiative, Evaluating the Achievements: From Partnership to Policy, to Action, Discussion Paper, January 2011 (hereinafter UNODC PPI Evaluating the Achievements), p. 6: <https://www.paris-pact.net/upload/c9029ec38931b0cd6ce8f3604b345b45.pdf>.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 4.

¹¹ Paris Pact Initiative, What is it?: https://www.paris-pact.net/index.php?action=cms_render§ion=85&menu_loc=main&mm=mm3. See also UNODC Rainbow Strategy, Introduction, The Paris Pact Initiative: http://www.unodc.org/documents/afghanistan//Rainbow_Strategy/Rainbow_Strategy.pdf.

- To further strengthen counter narcotics data collection and analytical capacity, a network of 10 **National Strategic Analysts** cover key Paris Pact partner countries in their work, such as the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, the Central Asian Republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the Russian Federation, Serbia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The “Paris Pact” was made in May 2003, at the Ministerial Conference on Drug Routes from Central Asia to Europe held in Paris. More than 50 countries and international organizations attending the Conference agreed to both a shared responsibility in the fight against drug trafficking from Afghanistan and more specifically to “combine their wills and their countries’ efforts to step up national capabilities, develop regional partnerships and hence tackle all the aspects of this problem. This is an international security imperative.”¹²

In September 2004, UNODC launched the Paris Pact Initiative Phase I, a 30-month project.¹³ This first phase focused on (i) strengthening border controls in West and Central Asia; (ii) setting up legal and institutional frameworks related to drug trafficking in key countries; and (iii) improving regional cooperation in West and Central Asia and among European countries.¹⁴ To accomplish these goals, UNODC established the consultative mechanism and developed the ADAM.¹⁵

In June 2006, the Second Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking Routes from Afghanistan was held in Moscow. Participants expressed their continued support for the Paris Pact Initiative and their desire to enhance and broaden the scope of the activities.¹⁶ There “was a noticeable shift in the language of the Paris Pact, away from policy and information sharing, towards a more action-oriented coordinated approach.”¹⁷

Shortly after the second ministerial meeting, Phase II of the Paris Pact Initiative was launched with six priority objectives:¹⁸

- (i) Improving the operational focus of the Consultative mechanisms;
- (ii) Ensuring a more efficient and effective follow-up to the Paris Pact recommendations;
- (iii) Ensuring wider use and sustainability of ADAM;
- (iv) Advocating a balanced approach to drug issues;

¹² Paris Pact Declaration, 2003: https://www.paris-pact.net/upload/static/paris_statement.pdf.

¹³ UNODC PPI Evaluating the Achievements, *supra* note 9, p. 5. The budget for Phase I was US \$1.144 million.

¹⁴ See *ibid*.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 7

¹⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁸ *Ibid*.

- (v) Fostering partnerships with relevant sub-regional, regional and international actors; and
- (vi) Strengthening counter narcotics analytical capacity.

During PPI Phase II, the National Strategic Analyst Network (the third component of the Initiative) was established and UNODC developed the Rainbow Strategy.¹⁹ The Rainbow Strategy was developed “to facilitate the implementation of priority actions identified at the Paris Pact expert round tables.”²⁰ The strategy comprises seven operational plans or papers listed below.²¹ “Each plan addresses key targets, allowing for constructive engagement with prime regional actors, facilitating and supplementing interventions from national governments and other Paris Pact partners.”²² The papers were proposed at various expert round table meetings and endorsed at the policy consultation meetings in 2007 and 2008.²³

Rainbow Strategy Papers

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| The Blue Paper | Afghanistan’s Opium Poppy Free Road Map and Provincial Profiles |
| The Green Paper | Afghanistan, Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan: Border Management Cooperation in Drug Control |
| The Yellow Paper | Securing Central Asia’s borders with Afghanistan |
| The Violet Paper | The Caspian Sea and Turkmen Border Initiatives |
| The Red Paper | Targeting Precursors Used in Heroin Manufacture: Operation TARCET |
| The Orange Paper | Financial flows linked to Afghan opiates production and trafficking |
| The Indigo Paper | Preventing and Treating Opiates Addiction and HIV/AIDS Epidemics in Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries |

Phase III of the Paris Pact Initiative began in June 2010. Phase III “built on the achievements of Phases I and II, to deliver more focused evidence for action, identify and recommend targeted interventions for mitigating the trafficking and consumption of Afghan opiates, enhance further

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 8.

²⁰ UNODC, Central Asia, Drug Trafficking and Border Control, Ongoing Projects, GLO/J33 - "The Paris Pact Initiative, Phase II - A Partnership To Counter Traffic In And Consumption Of Afghan Opiates:" <http://www.unodc.org/centralasia/en/ongoing-projects/drug-trafficking-and-border-control.html>.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid; see also UNODC, Drug-Trafficking, Central Asia: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-trafficking/central-asia.html>.

²³ See UNODC PPI Evaluating the Achievements, *supra* note 9, p. 9.

the coordination of technical assistance and cross reference Paris Pact activities with those of the UNODC Rainbow Strategy and other related initiatives.”²⁴

In February 2012, a Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combatting Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan was held in Vienna. Participants again affirmed the shared responsibility to combat drug trafficking stating, "We recognize that the narcotics problem is a global challenge which also requires a global response, including addressing the demand and supply sides."²⁵ The Paris Pact partners agreed on four pillars for future enhanced cooperation:²⁶

1. strengthening and implementing regional initiatives;
2. detecting and blocking financial flows linked to illicit traffic in opiates;
3. preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals used in illicit opiates manufacturing in Afghanistan; and
4. reducing drug abuse and dependence through a comprehensive approach.

Phase IV of the Paris Pact Initiative began on June 1, 2013, and is based on the four priority areas identified in the Vienna Declaration.²⁷ “As part of the activities of Phase IV, ADAM will be aligned to these four thematic areas.”²⁸ At the time of this writing, the project document was not available for review.

The Triangular Initiative

The Triangular Initiative is a regional initiative developed by UNODC as part of the Rainbow Strategy Green Paper.²⁹ The Initiative was established in direct response to the Paris Pact Initiative roundtable recommendations to enhance cross border cooperation in counternarcotics efforts for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran.³⁰ “The Triangular Initiative has been a major stimulus in drawing together Ministers and senior officials from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, to discuss and agree upon measures to improve cross-border cooperation in countering narcotics trafficking and the smuggling of precursor chemicals, to and from Afghanistan.”³¹ The Initiative “sets in motion a series of trust building measures and joint operations, with the ultimate goal of information/intelligence sharing. The role of UNODC is to serve as the Secretariat of the

²⁴ Ibid, p. 5.

²⁵ Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combating Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan, Vienna, 16 February 2012, Vienna Declaration (hereinafter Vienna Declaration), para. 3: <https://www.paris-pact.net/upload/10d2c7cf321d26b322738b5b1651e2a8.pdf>.

²⁶ See Ibid, para. 8; see also Paris Pact Initiative, Home, Introduction: https://www.paris-pact.net/index.php?action=home_page§ion=43&menu_loc=main&mm=mm1.

²⁷ See Paris Pact Initiative, Home, Introduction: https://www.paris-pact.net/index.php?action=home_page§ion=43&menu_loc=main&mm=mm1.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ UNODC PPI Evaluation the Achievements, *supra* note 9, p. 15.

³⁰ Ibid, pp 15-16.

³¹ Ibid, p. 16.

Triangular Initiative, facilitate the implementation of technical assistance and mobilize financial support.”³²

Operationally, the key components of the Triangular Initiative include a Joint Planning Cell (JPC) in Teheran and Border Liaison Offices. The JPC is an information and intelligence sharing cell and a “platform for daily operational cooperation in facilitating joint operations.”³³ UNODC reports that 11 joint field operations have been carried out.³⁴ In addition, all three countries “have identified strategic locations to place Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) at their common borders to improve information exchange and ensure a concerted inter-agency and cross-border response against drugs and precursor trafficking.”³⁵

International Narcotics Control Board Initiatives

As discussed in Chapter 5.4, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) has developed on-line tools to support international information sharing including the Pre-Export Notification (PEN) Online and Precursors Incident Communication System (PICS).³⁶ “The Afghan authorities have now joined the 120 countries registered to use PEN Online, the Board’s pre-export notification system for shipments of precursors.”³⁷ Operationally, the INCB functions as the international focal point for information on targeted time-limited operations and investigations including Project Cohesion focused on acetic anhydride and potassium permanganate and Project Prism focused on synthetic drug precursors and equipment.³⁸

³² UNODC in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Triangular Initiative:
<http://www.unodc.org/islamicrepublicofiran/en/triangular-initiative.html>.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ See International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), Annual Report, Precursors Annual Report:
http://www.incb.org/incb/en/precursors/technical_reports/precursors-technical-reports.html; see also INCB, Publications, Technical Reports: <http://www.incb.org/incb/en/publications/technical-reports.html>.

³⁷ Statement by Prof. Hamid Ghodse, President of the INCB, Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combating Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan, Vienna, 16 February 2012:
http://www.incb.org/documents/Speeches/Speeches2012/2012_February_Paris_Pact_Ministerial_Speech_eng_1_40212.pdf.

³⁸ UNODC PPI Evaluating the Achievements, *supra* note 9, pp. 12-13. Acetic anhydride is the precursor chemical for heroin; potassium permanganate for cocaine. Project Cohesion combined Operation Purple focused on potassium permanganate and Operation Topaz focused on acetic anhydride. Project Prism focuses on synthetic drug precursors and equipment. See Chapter 5.4 for a description of INCB’s Project Cohesion.

The Central Asian Regional and Information Coordination Centre

Afghanistan is an *observer* member of the Central Asian Regional and Information Coordination Centre (CARICC).³⁹ The CARICC was established within the Memorandum of Understanding on sub-regional drug control cooperation dated May 4, 1996, between Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and UNODC.⁴⁰ The CARICC is based in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The purpose of the CARICC is “to facilitate information and intelligence exchange and analysis, and to assist in the coordination of operational activities of the various law enforcement agencies in the region including police, drug control agencies, customs, border guards and special services and thereby improve effectiveness in countering drug trafficking.”⁴¹ The CARICC has identified the following tasks:⁴²

1. Collections, storage, protection, analysis and exchange of information in the field of combating illicit drug trafficking;
2. Providing expert and methodological support to the competent agencies of CARICC member-states; and
3. Coordination of multilateral international operations, including controlled deliveries.

In line with the third task - controlled deliveries – Operation Targeted Anti-Trafficking Regional Communication, Expertise and Training (TARCET) was launched under the guidance of UNODC and the Project Cohesion Task Force.⁴³ The CARICC serves as the operational control unit.⁴⁴ Operation TARCET is a law enforcement response to the need for a systematic exchange of information on the diversion of precursor chemicals used for the production of heroin, both in the drug transit countries and in Afghanistan, into illicit channels.⁴⁵ During Operation TARCET I and II (2008 and 2009 respectively), 45 tons of acetic anhydride were seized in addition to 462 tons of other chemicals.⁴⁶ Afghanistan participated in Operation TARCET and “operational links have been established with [CARICC] to ensure the real-time exchange of information that is required to launch investigations in neighbouring countries.”⁴⁷

³⁹ See Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC), Observers at the CARICC: <http://www.caricc.org/index.php/en/component/content/article?id=38>.

⁴⁰ See CARICC, Member States of the CARICC Agreement: <http://www.caricc.org/index.php/en/about-caricc/member-states>.

⁴¹ UNODC PPI Evaluation the Achievements, *supra* note 9, p. 13.

⁴² See CARICC, Services: <http://www.caricc.org/index.php/en/about-caricc/caricc-services>.

⁴³ UNODC PPI Evaluating the Achievements, *supra* note 9, p. 12. See Subchapter 5.4 for a description of INCB's Project Cohesion.

⁴⁴ UNODC PPI Evaluating the Achievements, *supra* note 9, p. 13.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 12. The recommendation was made by the Second Ministerial Conference in Moscow, Moscow Declaration, June 2006, Recommendation 3, Unofficial Translation: https://www.paris-pact.net/upload/static/Moscow_declaration_2006.pdf.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*. Figures for TARCET III (launched in 2011) were not available.

⁴⁷ UNODC PPI Evaluating the Achievements, *supra* note 9, pp. 12 & 15.

Global Container Control Programme

The Container Control Programme (CCP) is a UNODC-World Customs Organization (WCO) program with the following activities:⁴⁸

1. Theoretical and practical training specially adapted to surveillance of sea containers including information exchange, risk assessment and targeting techniques, governance, and integrity. Training is also provided on the use of ContainerCOMM, an internet based, secure, multifunctional communication system developed by the WCO Secretariat to facilitate the encrypted exchange of sensitive information, particularly the movement of suspected high risk containers.
2. Establishment of “Joint Port Control Units”. These teams combine officials from Customs authorities, police services and any other law enforcement agencies.
3. Encouragement of alliances between state services, economic operators and trade associations to promote information exchange and to prevent any diversion of legitimate trade for criminal purposes.
4. Cooperation with international bodies involved in the regulation and supervision of global container traffic.

Pakistan’s sea ports of Karachi and Port Qasim were the initial sites for the CCP due to the country’s proximity to Afghanistan.⁴⁹ In addition to the sea ports, key dry ports are also part of the program including the Afghan border crossings of Chaman and Torkham.⁵⁰ The CCP has also focused on ports in Turkmenistan (Turkmenbashi and Ashgabat) to combat the trafficking of drugs and precursor chemicals through Afghanistan’s ‘Northern Route.’⁵¹ In 2011, a Joint Port Control Unit (JPCU) was established in Kabul, Afghanistan.⁵² The Kabul JPCU includes members from the Counter Narcotic Police of Afghanistan, Border Police of Afghanistan and the Customs General Directorate.⁵³ In June 2011, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Customs and Border Protection and the DHS Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HIS) jointly provided a one-week training for the Kabul JPCU on precursor chemicals and other counter proliferation issues.⁵⁴ In February 2012, the

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 14.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ World Customs Organization (WCO), Topics, Enforcement and Compliance, Activities and Programmes, Container Control Programme: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/enforcement-and-compliance/activities-and-programmes/unodc_wco_container_control_programme.aspx. The container control program in Pakistan includes a total of seven dry ports in Chaman, Faisalabad, Lahore, Multan, Sambrial, Sust, and Torkham.

⁵¹ Ibid. The route through Central Asia, the Russian Federation, and into Eastern Europe is known as the ‘Northern Route.’

⁵² UNODC, Year End Report 2011, UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme, p. 14: http://www.unodc.org/documents/toc/CCP_Year_End_Report_2011.pdf.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Iranian port of Bandar Abbas Shaheed Rajee officially joined the CCP representing “a strategic hub for transit containers going to and coming from Afghanistan.”⁵⁵

Northern Route Working Group

The drug route from Afghanistan through Central Asia, the Russian Federation, and into Eastern Europe is known as the ‘Northern Route.’ The Northern Route Working Group “is a multi-lateral initiative that includes drug law enforcement agencies from Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Russia, and Kyrgyzstan, along with their respective [U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)] counterparts.”⁵⁶ The goal of the working group is to increase cooperation and “specifically target transnational drug trafficking organizations responsible for the flow of illicit narcotics throughout the region.”⁵⁷ The first joint operation occurred in October 2010, with participation from the Russian Federal Drug Control Service, the Afghan Sensitive Investigation Unit (SIU), National Interdiction Unit (NIU), U.S. DEA, and “military enablers, which resulted in the seizure and destruction of approximately 932 kilograms of brown heroin and 156 kilograms of opium.”⁵⁸

Central Asia Counternarcotics Initiative

The U.S. proposed establishing the Central Asia Counternarcotics Initiative (CACI) at the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combatting Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan. CACI establishes specialized drug investigative units in the Central Asian countries including Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.⁵⁹ The units are intended to work with each other and Afghanistan to interdict and dismantle drug networks and undermine the sources of financing for militants in the region. The CARICC is intended to serve as the platform for CACI. CACI’s goals are to:⁶⁰

- Disrupt drug-trafficking from Afghanistan and dismantle transnational crime organizations.

⁵⁵ UNODC, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iran To Strengthen Control Over Transit Containers: <http://www.unodc.org/islamicrepublicofiran/en/iran-to-strengthen-control-over-transit-containers.html>. The Iran program falls within the EC-ECO project "Fight against illicit drug trafficking to/from Afghanistan", and is financed by the European Commission.

⁵⁶ U.S. Department of Justice, Statement of Thomas M. Harrigan Assistant Administrator and Chief of Operations, Drug Enforcement Administration, Before the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, United States Senate, “Counternarcotics Efforts in Afghanistan,” July 20, 2011, p. 9: http://www.justice.gov/dea/pr/speeches-testimony/2012-2009/110720_herrigan_hearing.PDF.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ INL, The Central Asia Counternarcotics Initiative, Fact Sheet, February 21, 2012: <http://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/fs/184295.htm>. The U.S. initial investment in CACI was \$4.2 million, which is in addition to the \$14 million invested in bilateral agreements with the Central Asian countries.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

- Establish government networks to enhance investigation, prosecution and conviction of traffickers.
- Promote regional cooperation for successful joint and cross-border operations.
- Build forensic, investigative and prosecutorial capacity to identify and arrest leaders of drug-trafficking organizations.
- Develop counter-narcotics task forces to enable meaningful law enforcement cooperation.

The Istanbul Process

In November 2011, the “Heart of Asia” countries - including Afghanistan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and the United Arab Emirates - adopted *The Declaration of the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan* (Istanbul Process).⁶¹ The Istanbul Process is a political process to promote peace, security, and development in Afghanistan through regional cooperation among the Heart of Asia countries. The Istanbul Process recognizing Afghanistan’s crucial role as a “land bridge” in promoting connectivity and cooperation across the region.⁶² The Istanbul Process identifies a number of confidence building measures intended to build greater trust. At a follow up ministerial meeting held in Kabul in June 2012, the Heart of Asia countries, expanded to include Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, agreed upon prioritized confidence building measures (CBM) including counternarcotics.⁶³

Counter Narcotics CBM: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates decide to participate in implementation, and Russia and Azerbaijan express willingness to lead the CBM implementation. We also welcome the readiness of Canada, Denmark, the European Union, France, the United Kingdom and the United States to support the implementation of this CBM.

On February 6, 2013, Azerbaijan hosted senior officials and international organizations to discuss an action plan for the counternarcotics confidence building measure.⁶⁴ At the third ministerial conference held on April 26, 2013 in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the participants adopted six CBM implementation plans on counter terrorism, counternarcotics, disaster management,

⁶¹ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, News, Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan (Istanbul Process): <http://mfa.gov.af/en/news/4598>.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ The Istanbul Process, Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference –Kabul, 14 June 2012, Conference Declaration: <http://heartofasiaministerial-mfa.gov.af/home.html>.

⁶⁴ See AzerNews, Senior Officials meet within Istanbul Process in Baku, 6 February 2013: <http://www.azernews.az/azerbaijan/49415.html>.

trade, commercial and investment opportunities, regional infrastructure, and education.⁶⁵ The implementation plans themselves are not currently publically available, however, with regard to the counternarcotics CBM the Conference Declaration provides:⁶⁶

We welcome and adopt the implementation plan and thank the Russian Federation and the Republic of Azerbaijan for leading the CN-CBM group, as well as the participating states of the CBM for actively supporting the development of the implementation plan. While appreciating the efforts and sacrifices in terms of human and financial resources by Afghanistan and the neighboring countries, we welcome the commitment by regional countries to expand cooperation in this area, including by strengthening the work of existing organizations, mechanisms and initiatives, and by creating synergies among them. We highlight the emphasis in the implementation plan that counter narcotics efforts must not only be limited to tackling the production and trafficking of drugs, but also to prevention, demand reduction, and the provision of alternative sources of livelihood to poor farming communities involved in cultivation. Focusing on the trafficking of drug precursors and preventing its supplies to Afghanistan must also be a priority.

Actual implementation will be largely dependent upon funding, which is currently an *ad hoc* process. The Afghan Government has proposed the establishment of a trust fund. China will host the 4th Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process on Afghanistan in Beijing in 2014.

NATO Russia Council

The NATO-Russia Council (NRC) was established in 2002, as “a mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision and joint action, in which the individual NATO member states and Russia work as equal partners on a wide spectrum of security issues of common interest.”⁶⁷ Within the context of counternarcotics, the NRC has established a counternarcotics training course for counternarcotics officers in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan.⁶⁸ UNODC implements the project, which began in 2006, and has trained more than 2,200 counternarcotics officers from

⁶⁵ See Istanbul Process: Stability and Prosperity in the ‘Heart of Asia’ through Building Confidence and Shared Regional Interests ‘Heart of Asia’ Ministerial Conference – Almaty 26 April 2013: <http://mfa.gov.af/en/news/19668>.

⁶⁶ Ibid. Although the Conference Declaration states the implementation plans are attached as annexes to the Declaration they were not.

⁶⁷ NATO-Russia Council, About: <http://www.nato-russia-council.info/en/about/>. The NRC “replaced the Permanent Joint Council (PJC), a forum for consultation and cooperation created by the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, which remains the formal basis for NATO-Russia relations.” Ibid.

⁶⁸ See NRC Counter Narcotics Training Project representatives meet, October, 16 2012: <http://www.nato-russia-council.info/EN/articles/20121016-cnt-reps-meet/>.

the region.⁶⁹ In January 2014, representatives of NRC nations met in Brussels to coordinate its work for the upcoming year:⁷⁰

In what looks set to be a busy year ahead, the project will continue to provide training courses for Afghan, Central Asian and Pakistani counter narcotics officers organised by the UNODC's Regional Office for Central Asia. This includes over 30 courses at fixed training facilities in Russia, Turkey and the US as well as a number of mobile training courses which will take place in the region.

Canine training courses for Central Asian counter narcotics officers will also begin at the Rostov-on-Don Canine Training Centre in Russia. Specialised subjects such as the identification and interception of clandestine laboratories will also be a focus for other courses, in line with the specific needs identified by the trainees. Building on the work done in 2013, cross border counter narcotics training courses look to continue to be a key theme, promoting regional cooperation in the fight against the illegal narcotics trade.

It is also set to be an important year for the project in terms of looking forward. In the course of 2014, the NRC nations' representatives are set to meet with representatives from key counter narcotics agencies across Afghanistan, Central Asian nations and Pakistan. Those nations will have an opportunity to let the NRC know what their officers really need to be getting from counter narcotics training courses.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ NRC Counter Narcotics Training Project organises 2014 work: <http://www.nato-russia-council.info/en/articles/2014-01-29-nrc-counter-narcotics-training-project/>.

Resources

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) World Drug Report 2013: http://www.unodc.org/unodc/secured/wdr/wdr2013/World_Drug_Report_2013.pdf.
- UNODC World Drug Report 2012: http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/WDR2012/WDR_2012_web_small.pdf.
- UNODC, Paris Pact Initiative, Evaluating the Achievements: From Partnership to Policy, to Action, Discussion Paper, January 2011: <https://www.paris-pact.net/upload/c9029ec38931b0cd6ce8f3604b345b45.pdf>.
- Paris Pact Declaration, 2003: https://www.paris-pact.net/upload/static/paris_statement.pdf.
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