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Illicit drug traffic and supply**Connections between organized criminal groups trafficking in drugs and those involved in other types of illicit trafficking: special investigative techniques to counteract such criminality****Report of the Executive Director**

1. At its forty-fifth session, in 2002, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs adopted resolution 45/9, entitled “Connections between organized criminal groups trafficking in drugs and those involved in other types of illicit trafficking: special investigative techniques to counteract such criminality”. In that resolution, the Commission requested the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to report to it at its forty-seventh session on the progress achieved in the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted in response to that request.

2. In its resolution 45/9, the Commission identified a number of shortfalls in the existing response by States to act effectively against trafficking by organized criminal groups. It also recognized the increasing tendency of organized criminal groups to use the same criminal networks that carry out operations involving trafficking in drugs and other types of trafficking, such as trafficking in human beings and firearms. Among the key areas requiring attention are poorly trained law enforcement agencies; lack of technical equipment to support operations; inadequate cooperation between national agencies and across borders; lack of capacity to develop information into operational intelligence; incomplete legislation to enable the application of all the international tools available to combat cross-border crime; and underutilization of successful enforcement techniques such as controlled delivery. In its resolution 45/9, the Commission requested the United Nations Office

* E/CN.7/2004/1.



on Drugs and Crime to provide interested Member States with technical assistance and training in the use of new investigative techniques to counter drug trafficking.

3. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has responded by assisting Governments in upgrading their professional skills and in introducing new approaches and procedures to break the links existing between those engaged in drug trafficking and those engaged in other forms of illicit cross-border criminality. The Office has provided training and assistance involving the use of investigative techniques in a number of areas, including the following:

(a) Covert intelligence-gathering, including mobile and static surveillance and the use of technical tracking equipment;

(b) Sophisticated technical evidence-gathering, including interception of communications;

(c) Controlled delivery operations;

(d) Training and introducing systems for the recruitment, management, use and control of informants;

(e) Use of undercover officers;

(f) Developing witness protection programmes;

(g) Financial investigation: asset tracing and seizure;

(h) Intelligence-led law enforcement: provision and use of advanced intelligence analysis and systems.

4. Such specialist techniques are equally useful to law enforcement, whether investigating drug trafficking or other forms of organized crime or terrorism.

5. As regards organized crime, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is assisting Governments in developing new investigative techniques to identify and quantify the extent of the threat posed by organized criminal activity to their communities. Through two pilot programmes involving 17 countries, the typologies of criminal groups have been studied and the results made available to Member States on the web site of the Office (www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/publications/Pilot_survey.pdf). As a result, a checklist for the gathering of key data on the subject has been developed and is being applied in two regional assessment projects. The Office, in partnership with the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), intends to develop data generated by the checklist and to publish current information on trends in organized crime and details of criminal groups.

6. In 2003, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime organized and conducted 16 national, subregional and regional seminars on the promotion and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Over 1,600 criminal justice practitioners received training.

7. The promotion of national financial investigation units specifically mandated to target the illicit proceeds of crime is a priority area for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Since its introduction, that approach has proved to be successful. Assisting Member States in strengthening both national legislation and the investigative powers of national competent law enforcement authorities, thus depriving organized crime of any financial gain from its illegal activities, is a key

area for the Office's anti-money-laundering programme. The Office is working with Member States in drafting sound legislation to empower effective financial investigation units and in providing training in the best practice investigative techniques for the officers who work in them.

8. The programme of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is assisting Governments in establishing professional associations among those working in the non-financial sector, such as lawyers, accountants and dealers in high-value luxury goods such as motor vehicles and works of art, to report suspicious transactions and dealings of possible interest to the authorities. Countering the abuse of financial institutions by criminal organizations wishing to launder illicit proceeds extends beyond strict bank regulations. Internationally the programme works with the Egmont Group of financial intelligence units to facilitate the process and establish the professional procedures needed to make possible the exchange of information on suspicious international financial transactions.

9. Underpinning all the work the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime does to counter money-laundering is the provision of modern and effective support for training in that area. Currently in development for law enforcement financial investigators in developing countries is a fully interactive computer-based training programme on financial investigation.

10. In recognition of the need for common operational standards among control authorities and law enforcement agencies, the Office has developed an electronic learning (e-learning) programme based upon interactive computer-based training. The programme offers a bench-marked level of professional expertise for law enforcement agencies in the latest selection, interdiction, interview and investigative techniques. The syllabus of the e-learning programme also covers areas of risk assessment and operational planning. That training resource, initially developed for and introduced in the six Asian countries that signed the memorandum of understanding, Cambodia, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam, is now being introduced in other countries and regions of the world through assistance projects of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. As a result, the standard of procedures for the investigation and prosecution of trafficking offences has been raised, making it easier to reach compatibility in front-line operational practice.

11. Intelligent deployment of finite resources (staff and equipment) measured against the increasing volumes of cross-border trade and travel is the effective edge that Governments have against organized crime. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is supporting States through the introduction of new techniques in the gathering, collation and analysis of raw information to be turned into operational intelligence and directly applied by front-line agencies to combat trafficking. Through its global assistance programme, the Office is delivering technical support to Governments to assist them in the development of modern national information systems that will support the latest developments in investigative techniques. It is also providing training for the specialist analysts who work in those areas, as well as the latest analytical software to enable them to develop the practical, intelligence-led response now demanded.

12. Complementing the promotion of intelligence-led law enforcement the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is working regionally to create platforms upon

which law enforcement agencies can exchange information and coordinate cross-border operations. Under the umbrella of the United Nations, the traditional meetings of subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs are evolving as a forum for the development of more specific regional law enforcement responses. In Asia and the Pacific regional task forces have been promoted to target specific criminal groups operating across multiple jurisdictions. The Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East has identified specific regional impediments to operational cooperation in law enforcement and acted to find practical solutions to overcome them.

13. Projects carried out by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime are aimed at upgrading the technical capacity of law enforcement agencies to keep pace with the sophisticated technology employed by organized criminal groups. The programme delivers modern equipment and professional training in its use in order to improve border interdiction, sophisticated electronic surveillance and tracking and to ensure secure communications between agencies and across borders in joint operations. That area is particularly important with regard to ensuring the success of controlled delivery operations and the maintenance of ongoing control over such consignments while in transit. The Office places special emphasis on the use and promotion of controlled delivery as an effective technique in dismantling trafficking networks and identifying and prosecuting the principals of the organized criminal groups. As a result, the programme has invested considerable resources in assisting States in drafting and introducing legislation that will support the use of this and other modern and innovative law enforcement techniques, as well as practical training by experts in their application.
