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Implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem: follow-up to the high-level review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in view of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016

Strengthening international cooperation in combating illicit opiates originating in Afghanistan through continuous and reinforced support to the Paris Pact initiative

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

The present report, provided pursuant to Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 56/3, on “Strengthening international cooperation in combating illicit opiates originating in Afghanistan through continuous and reinforced support to the Paris Pact initiative”, describes steps taken by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to implement that resolution. In resolution 56/3, the Commission welcomed and reiterated its support for the Paris Pact initiative as one of the most important international frameworks and a unique platform for genuine partnership between States, competent international organizations and other relevant stakeholders in the fight against opiates originating in Afghanistan. The Commission continued to call upon Member States, in cooperation with UNODC and other entities, to promote the full implementation of the Vienna Declaration, the outcome document of the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combating Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan, held in February 2012. As decided by Paris Pact partners and reiterated by the Commission, the Paris Pact initiative will utilize the Vienna Declaration as the framework for all future interventions within its four agreed upon areas for enhanced cooperation.

* E/CN.7/2014/1.



I. Background

1. The Vienna Declaration,¹ adopted at the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact partners on Combating Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan, held in February 2012, is a statement of international commitment to act in a balanced and comprehensive manner against the menace of opiates originating in Afghanistan. In the Declaration, participants prioritized four main areas for enhanced cooperation: regional initiatives; financial flows linked to illicit traffic in opiates; preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals; and reducing drug abuse and dependence. The Conference signified an important landmark for the Paris Pact, as partners reaffirmed their common and shared responsibility for combating opiates. The Vienna Declaration serves as a blueprint for the activities of Paris Pact partners in recognition of the pivotal role of counter-narcotics efforts in building security, democracy and prosperity in Afghanistan.

2. At the reconvened meeting of the Paris Pact Policy Consultative Group held on 3 September 2012, Paris Pact partners formally adopted the Vienna Declaration as a road map to guide efforts to operationalize the Declaration during the fourth phase of the Paris Pact initiative,² with coordination and technical assistance support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

3. On the same occasion, partners endorsed the findings and recommendations of the evaluation³ of the Paris Pact initiative, which confirmed the importance of the unique mechanism provided by the UNODC-supported initiative. Based on the political and operational outcomes and the key findings of the evaluation, partners agreed to extend the third phase to May 2013, which allowed for adequate planning and design of the new phase, with the following three existing components: the consultative mechanism; the research and liaison officer network; and the automated donor assistance mechanism.

II. Fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

4. In recognition of the Paris Pact initiative, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at its fifty-sixth session, in March 2013, adopted resolution 56/3, in which it requested UNODC to provide regular reports to the Commission on the progress achieved and measures taken in implementation of the fourth phase of the initiative.

5. The Commission also took note with appreciation of the report of the Executive Director of UNODC prepared in compliance with Commission resolution 55/11, as well as the compendium of statements made in reference to the Vienna Declaration. The compendium, which may be used by UNODC in its programme activities in consultation with Member States, is aimed at strengthening

¹ See E/CN.7/2012/17.

² Following recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services as of June 2013, all projects and programmes at the global level, including project GLOY09 (phase IV of the Paris Pact initiative), are recognized as global programmes that are designed to respond to challenges that require a more coordinated response on an internal level.

³ The evaluation of the third phase of the Paris Pact initiative was conducted as an independent evaluation and retroactively categorized as an in-depth evaluation by the Independent Evaluation Unit in 2013.

the Paris Pact initiative and implementation of the Vienna Declaration. The Commission also requested UNODC to continue to cooperate with Member States in identifying and meeting technical assistance needs to effectively tackle the problem of illicit opiates, in particular in the priority areas outlined in the Declaration.

III. Status of implementation of Commission resolution 56/3

A. Launch of the fourth phase of the Paris Pact initiative

6. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Paris Pact partners continue to recognize the challenging circumstances and period ahead for all stakeholders tackling the menace of opiates originating in Afghanistan. In recognition of the need to strengthen coordination between Paris Pact partners and to streamline the Paris Pact framework towards operationalizing the Vienna Declaration, UNODC conducted extensive consultations among the partners to move forward the planning process for the fourth phase and ensure the incorporation of all work related to the Declaration, including the interregional drug control approach perspective of UNODC, as an equal partner.

7. The launch of the fourth phase of the Paris Pact initiative,⁴ on 1 June 2013, coincided with the tenth anniversary of the Ministerial Conference on Drug Routes from Central Asia to Europe, held in Paris on 21 and 22 May 2003, which marked the starting point of the initiative. The launch of the fourth phase is a critical juncture for the partnership to implement an even more operationally oriented approach for future interventions.

8. The UNODC programme document for the fourth phase of the initiative was presented and endorsed at the Policy Consultative Group meeting held on 6 and 7 March 2013. The fourth phase emphasizes the partnership as a multilayered initiative that assists in defining policy and translating it into action, with the objective of demonstrating the results of heightened collaboration among partners on the four priority areas for intervention outlined in the Vienna Declaration.

9. At the time of writing of the present report, the fourth phase of the initiative was less than one year into implementation, and UNODC was continuing the development of a systematic means of measuring progress made on the implementation of the four priority areas for enhanced cooperation outlined in the Vienna Declaration, at both the global and regional levels. This approach includes adjustments to those four pillars of the Declaration through the streamlining of the consultative mechanism, in particular, expert working group meeting topics, and the realignment of the Automated Donor Assistance Mechanism to support the partnership as a hub for information on matters related to the Paris Pact. The functions of the network of research and liaison officers have also been aligned more closely to facilitate cooperation on the four priority areas for intervention.

⁴ The results of the evaluation clearly defined for the first time the existence of two dimensions within the Paris Pact: firstly, the initiative itself, which encompasses 58 partner countries and 21 partner organizations, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); and, secondly, the UNODC programme, with its main objective of supporting the initiative.

10. This streamlining of the Paris Pact initiative is expected to culminate in the development of an annual global report aimed at facilitating systematic updating on the implementation of the Vienna Declaration. The goal is to visually map the information collected and data analysed, which will serve as the foundation for the report. The Drugs Monitoring Platform, a unique global online tool for collecting, monitoring and sharing drug-related data, will be used for that purpose.⁵ In line with the Paris Pact priority country approach, the report will focus on the countries covered by the regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries and the regional programme for South-Eastern Europe. The objective of the 2014 first-year report is to create a baseline on implementation for each pillar. Subsequent annual reports will be designed to demonstrate progress and widen the scope of the information being reported. The Paris Pact Coordination Unit and the Afghan Opiate Trade Project will jointly draft the report. The 2012 and 2013 expert working group conclusions and recommendations are to serve as the foundation for baseline development.

11. It is envisaged that the report will be based on an extensive collaborative effort with multiple UNODC interdivisional specialist sections and programmes whose activities contribute to the implementation of the four pillars for enhanced cooperation. The partnership will be requested to provide information on a set of streamlined key priority issues needed to inform the report baseline, provide an overview of available data and depict the present situation on the ground with respect to implementation of the Vienna Declaration. The research and liaison officers will be responsible for all report follow-up at the field level. The report may be considered as a complementary advocacy tool within UNODC.

B. Consultative mechanism

12. The objective of the first year of implementation of the fourth phase is to organize an expert working group meeting on each pillar of the Vienna Declaration prior to the Policy Consultative Group Meeting scheduled for June 2014. At the time of the writing of the present report, two of the four expert working group meetings dedicated to those pillars had been held, with a third scheduled to be held in the first quarter of 2014. The expert working groups reviewed the status of implementation of conclusions and recommendations instituted at previous meetings held on those topics, identified priority activities for future partnership interventions aimed at promoting the implementation of the Vienna Declaration framework, and built upon existing interthematic synergies for strengthening information sharing, international and regional cooperation and the further operationalization of the initiative.

13. The first meeting of the expert working group devoted exclusively to effective drug demand reduction interventions for children, adolescents and families was organized and hosted by UNODC on 22 and 23 October 2013 in Vienna. The meeting reviewed and discussed frameworks for identifying key at-risk groups,

⁵ The Paris Pact initiative, the Afghan Opiate Trade Project and the regional office for Central Asia of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime jointly initiated the Drugs Monitoring Platform. The Platform provides real-time information and analysis on illicit global trade in opiates.

assessing their needs and outlining potential methods to develop and implement effective interventions to prevent drug abuse and treat drug dependence within this particularly vulnerable group. A set of recommendations was compiled by UNODC for endorsement by the Policy Consultative Group at its meeting planned for 3 and 4 June 2014, to continue to guide the partnership's implementation of the fourth pillar of the Vienna Declaration, on reducing drug abuse and dependence.

14. The meeting of the expert working group on precursors, under the third pillar of the Declaration, was hosted by the European Police Office (Europol) in The Hague, the Netherlands, with the financial support of the European Union Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace. Discussions revolved around updates on the latest trends, routes and techniques used to smuggle precursor chemicals destined for use in illicit heroin production; how to build upon the successes of existing operationally oriented frameworks for cooperation, such as the regional intelligence working group on precursors; the importance of strengthening interregional cooperation; the promotion of information sharing; the tightening of precursor regulations; the standardization of analytical forensic methodologies to ensure the transfer of results; the strengthening of forensic intelligence and investigative capacities; and ways of building upon new operational initiatives to strengthen risk profiling and promote cooperation with the chemical industry.

15. The meeting of the expert working group on improving bilateral and multilateral information sharing and coordination of investigations, under the first pillar of the Vienna Declaration, on cross-border cooperation and legal frameworks, is scheduled to be hosted by Turkey on 18 and 19 February 2014 in Antalya, again with the financial support of the European Union Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace. Discussions will focus on liaison networks, operational meetings and information exchange, joint operations and controlled deliveries, challenges relating to cross-border cooperation with regard to Afghanistan in a post-2014 context, and a needs assessment for more effective and extensive cooperation between regional intelligence agencies.

16. At the time of writing of the present report, discussions were ongoing with the partnership to plan and identify a host for the next expert working group meeting, on detecting and blocking financial flows linked to illicit traffic in opiates, under the second pillar of the Vienna Declaration.

C. Synergies

17. As mandated by the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation, UNODC continues to build and further strengthen appropriate coordination among Paris Pact partners and in particular with all relevant interdivisional UNODC specialist sections and programmes, including the Organized Crime and Illicit Trafficking Branch (through the Implementation Support Section, the Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism, and the global Container Control Programme), the Drug Prevention and Health Branch (through the Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Unit) and the Research and Trend Analysis Branch. In line with the interregional drug control approach of UNODC that serves to interconnect all ongoing UNODC programmes addressing the opiate trade originating in Afghanistan, the Paris Pact initiative is

also coordinating with, in particular, the regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries and the regional programme for South-Eastern Europe. This approach is aimed at maximizing synergies, bolstering the integrated nature of UNODC projects and avoiding duplication of effort, to allow for more equitable coverage and technical assistance across all four priority areas outlined in the Vienna Declaration.

18. The Paris Pact initiative is witnessing the development of multiple activities in direct support of the Vienna Declaration under the auspices of other UNODC programmes, demonstrating a more habitual integration of the initiative into such programmes.

19. This level of enhanced cooperation within UNODC is evident through the cross cutting “Networking the networks” conference under the interregional drug control approach, held in Istanbul on 12 and 13 December 2013. That conference was linked to the 2013 Paris Pact expert working group conclusions, in particular those regarding bilateral and multilateral information sharing and coordination of operations, and the development of cooperation networks between regional centres in support of the first pillar of the Vienna Declaration.

20. As a follow-up to the 2013 expert working group conclusions in support of the second pillar of the Declaration, the UNODC Global Programme against Money Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism is conducting activities under the Paris Pact initiative on illicit financial flows through a study of responses to the questionnaire on financial flows linked to the illicit production and trafficking of Afghan opiates (Tashkent questionnaire), which was developed following the meeting of the first Paris Pact technical working group,⁶ held in Tashkent in 2009, for the purpose of facilitating data collection among Paris Pact partners, and through the drafting of an analytical report based on those findings. In addition, the Global Programme is aimed at furthering the action plan formulated at the 2011 Paris Pact expert meeting held in Abu Dhabi by designing a road map for the implementation of technical assistance within the West and Central Asia subregion and developing training curricula for law enforcement, the judiciary, financial intelligence units and others in support to the implementation of the action plan. The findings of the report are to be endorsed by the Policy Consultative Group at its meeting on 3 and 4 June 2014 to further operationalize the partnership’s implementation of the respective pillars of the Vienna Declaration.

21. The planning, coordination and implementation of the three recent expert working groups of the fourth phase of the Paris Pact initiative and the March 2013 Policy Consultative Group meeting were extensively supported by relevant interdivisional UNODC specialist sections and programmes, including the Organized Crime and Illicit Trafficking Branch, the Drug Prevention and Health Branch, the Research and Trend Analysis Branch and the regional programmes for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries and for South-Eastern Europe. The innovative work of the regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, in particular on precursors, may serve as a benchmark for planning future operational initiatives in support of the third pillar of the Vienna Declaration.

⁶ The working group was the predecessor of the current expert working group.

22. In support of the implementation of the Paris Pact mandate linked to developments along major opiate trafficking routes related to opiates originating in Afghanistan, the Paris Pact research and liaison officer network has supported the drafting of reports on key trafficking routes. Those reports were spearheaded under the interregional drug control approach and implemented by the regional programmes for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries and for South-Eastern Europe, together with the Research and Trend Analysis Branch of UNODC.

23. The research and liaison officers are integrated into key activities of the regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries that support the availability of evidence for strengthened action within the Paris Pact partnership.

24. Significant progress has been made to bolster the linkages between the Paris Pact initiative and the regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries regarding the four pillars of the Vienna Declaration, as well as the recommendations and conclusions emerging from the expert working groups. In particular, by developing and strengthening regional operational vehicles for tackling the trafficking of Afghan opiates, the regional programme is assisting in the achievement of Paris Pact recommendations and conclusions.

25. Several of those activities are aimed at outlining areas of mutual interest and highlighting mutually reinforcing activities to orient the future programmatic direction for both the Paris Pact initiative and the regional programme. The interregional drug control approach, in an attempt to maximize synergies under various levels of UNODC assistance, has facilitated some activities between the two programmes based on geographic specifications, and in future will serve to strengthen integrated messaging and a common approach at interregional events.

26. The Paris Pact initiative and the regional programme have begun the process of establishing links with each other through messaging and public communication materials.

D. Sustainability

27. At the time of writing of the present report, the fourth phase donors contributing to the implementation of the Paris Pact initiative consisted of France, Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States of America. The Paris Pact Coordination Unit can provide support to the initiative only until the end of January 2014, based on existing contributions. As recommended by the evaluation findings, regular and consistent funding is advocated for the initiative to allow for all activities outlined in the programme document endorsed by partners at the March 2013 Policy Consultative Group meeting to move beyond the initial planning stage.

IV. Paris Pact compendium of proposals

28. As a follow-up to a proposal made by the Executive Director of UNODC at the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners, UNODC compiled a first version of a compendium of proposals emanating from statements put forth by

partners at that conference. This compendium has been streamlined with the four priority areas for enhanced cooperation outlined in the Vienna Declaration.

29. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime presented this compendium to the partnership, and the compendium can be considered as a complementary advocacy tool to assist joint efforts of the partnership and UNODC to implement the Vienna Declaration.

30. The period from the inception of the compendium to the launch of the fourth phase of the Paris Pact initiative, coupled with the adoption of the Vienna Declaration as a road map, has allowed for key elements outlined within the compendium to be streamlined with the initiative to strengthen the availability of evidence for action in countries located along trafficking routes out of Afghanistan. This has been done through close cooperation both within UNODC and among members of the partnership. In that spirit, meetings between UNODC and the Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation in 2013 continued to further the development of the interactive map of Afghanistan, a proposal made by Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, at the Third Ministerial Conference, by building upon existing UNODC projects.
