

23 April 2019

Original: English\*

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**Thirteenth Meeting of Heads of National  
Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Europe**

Lisbon, 2–5 July 2019

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*\*

**Current situation with respect to regional and  
subregional cooperation****Current situation with respect to regional and subregional  
cooperation in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe****Report by the Secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. The present report provides an analysis of the situation concerning drugs, crime and terrorism in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe during the period under review (from the second half of 2017 to the first half of 2019) and describes the activities conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in those regions.
2. The work carried out by UNODC in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe is in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular, Sustainable Development Goal 16 on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, as well as Goals 3, 5, 10, 11 and 17. The work of UNODC is also in line with the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly.<sup>1</sup>
3. A particularly successful example in that context is the work carried out by UNODC in the Western Balkans to counter money-laundering. UNODC is supporting regional law enforcement and judicial authorities in conducting financial investigations and improving inter-agency, regional and interregional cooperation to achieve better results. Governments of the region have taken responsibility for this initiative, thereby ensuring a tailored approach and future sustainability. The initiative fosters cooperation in addressing illicit financial flows in the Balkans and beyond and has led to the development of the first ever national training programmes on financial investigations in all jurisdictions. That work directly supports target 16.3 on promoting the rule of law and target 16.4 on reducing illicit financial flows. It has also contributed to the signing of a working arrangement between UNODC and the

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\* Available only in English, French, Russian and Spanish, which are the working languages of the subsidiary body.

\*\* [UNODC/HONEURO/13/1](#).

<sup>1</sup> Resolution [S-30/1](#), annex.



European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training, thus reinforcing regional partnerships and, in doing so, furthering the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 17. In addition, women represented 43 per cent of all certified national trainers under the initiative, contributing to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 5.

## II. South-Eastern Europe

### A. Introduction

4. South-Eastern Europe has made significant progress in countering transnational organized crime and related threats. Nevertheless, the region continues to face serious challenges from criminal networks involved in trafficking in controlled substances, firearms and persons, smuggling of migrants, illicit financial flows, corruption, terrorism and drug use. This is partly explained by the region's geographical location: it is located along the shortest corridor in the world for trafficking heroin from source to destination countries and along an important route used by persons fleeing from countries experiencing war and instability to European States that may offer them international protection.

5. These challenges are interconnected, as many of the aforementioned crimes are committed by organized criminal groups that have diversified their operations over time, including terrorist organizations that engage in drug trafficking to generate revenue or organized criminal groups that use their illicit networks to traffic persons and smuggle weapons, counterfeit consumer goods and undeclared currency. These networks of traffickers rely on land, air and maritime routes to conduct their criminal activities. Criminal intelligence indicates that organized criminal groups in South-Eastern Europe are involved in trafficking and trading the above-mentioned items both in domestic markets and in Western Europe.

6. Drug trafficking poses a challenge both to law enforcement authorities, in particular, border authorities, and to public health systems and governance.<sup>2</sup> A comprehensive response based on a solid understanding of the ways in which organized criminal groups operate is required, as noted by academic advisers in their comments on the Serious and Organized Crime Threat Assessment 2017. Those advisers made the following observation: "Policymakers need to ensure that areas of criminal activity (including terrorism) are looked at as a whole, and that analysis is not limited by artificial geographical or administrative boundaries."<sup>3</sup>

7. UNODC is working within the framework of the Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe, the objective of which is to meet specific national needs while ensuring that national activities and outputs form part of a coordinated and harmonized regional and interregional approach in line with the principles that underlie UNODC activities globally. UNODC is bringing its global expertise and perspective to the region, embedding the Regional Programme in the national, regional, interregional and global contexts and creating coherence across those contexts. The Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe continues to provide support to Governments in the implementation of relevant treaties and instruments<sup>4</sup> and the requirements under chapters 23, 24 and 28 of the European Union acquis. The

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Drug Money: the Illicit Proceeds of Opiates Trafficked on the Balkan Route* (Vienna, 2015), pp. 48–49.

<sup>3</sup> See "Comment by academic advisers", available at [www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/comment\\_by\\_academic\\_advisors.pdf](http://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/comment_by_academic_advisors.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> These include, notably, the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto and the United Nations Convention against Corruption, as well as international anti-terrorism instruments.

Programme also supports countries in meeting the European Union accession criteria and fulfilling their obligations within the United Nations.

8. The current Regional Programme covers the period from 2016 to 2019. UNODC is in the process of developing a new regional programme for 2020 to 2023; a process endorsed by the Governments of the region. The programme is being developed in close coordination with national partners in South-Eastern Europe as part of an inclusive and participatory process that has involved key stakeholders from the very outset and avoids duplication of efforts. The situational analysis prepared for the regional programme document was useful in the drafting of the present section and provides an overview of the current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation, with only brief reference to the work of UNODC in the Balkans. Detailed reports on that work are available from UNODC, including through the dedicated web page. The section of this report on Eastern Europe focuses to a greater extent on the work of UNODC in this region.

## **B. Organized crime and drug trafficking**

### **Drug trafficking**

9. Drug trafficking and other smuggling activity affecting this region pose a major threat to national economic development and to the integrity of international supply chains. Cargo shipments, including sea containers, are particularly vulnerable and are a constant target for the shipment of large quantities of drugs, often hidden in legitimate cargo. Drug trafficking is one of the most important sources of income for organized criminal groups. Large volumes of heroin and, more recently, cocaine, are trafficked through South-Eastern Europe and the facilitation of those smuggling operations is profitable for local organized criminal structures and – to an unknown degree – for corrupt officials. Most of the cannabis resin found in Europe appears to come from Morocco. Albania is, together with the Netherlands, the European country most commonly mentioned in connection with cross-border trafficking in herbal cannabis. It also serves as one of the first distribution hubs for cannabis resin trafficked from Afghanistan.

10. The Balkan route has been the major route for trafficking heroin into Europe by land, sea and air for several decades. It serves as the southern corridor for transporting heroin from Afghanistan, the source of some 83 per cent of the world's heroin, to European markets.<sup>5</sup> The route begins in Afghanistan and passes through the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey and Bulgaria, with a smaller quantity of heroin transported through Greece.

11. The drug seizures made in South-Eastern Europe by the UNODC-World Customs Organization Container Control Programme's joint port control units are evidence of the region's role as a transit route for different types of drugs, including cocaine, several recent seizures of which have totalled approximately 1 ton. In addition to drug trafficking, seizures made by the port control units show that the smuggling of revenue goods, the violation of intellectual property rights and trafficking in arms and stolen cars also take place within the region.

12. The seizures reported by the port control units in 2018 include 11.395 kg of heroin and 613.35 kg of cocaine (with a market value of 180 million euros) at the port of Durres and 38 kg of cocaine at the port of Bar (the total amount of cocaine seized by the port control units at the port of Bar between 2016 and 2019 was 353 kg). The Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre estimates that the value of heroin and

<sup>5</sup> Data taken from various UNODC reports and sources. Further information available at [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/index.html?ref=menuaside](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/index.html?ref=menuaside).

cocaine seized in its member States<sup>6</sup> in 2017 was approximately 600 million euros and 150 million euros, respectively.

13. Organized criminal groups involved in drug trafficking have diversified their criminal activities (trafficking in persons, diamonds, protected species, etc.). According to the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), almost two thirds of drug trafficking groups operating in the European Union are involved in more than one area of crime, such as trafficking in persons and arms, counterfeit goods and smuggling of migrants, for which similar routes are often used. That figure has been increasing in recent years and Albania is considered to be a hub for trafficking in fake passports, which are used by many smugglers in the context of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

### **Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants**

14. The *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018* identified more than 570 different trafficking flows within countries, between neighbouring countries and across continents. While the report covers identified cases only and is therefore not necessarily representative of the overall situation, findings consistent with other available data include the fact that the majority of victims (71 per cent) are female and that more than a quarter (28 per cent) are children. Women and girls tend to be trafficked for marriage and sexual exploitation, while men and boys are typically trafficked for forced labour.

15. According to the report, the profile of detected trafficking victims has changed over the past decade, with children and men now representing larger shares of the total number of victims. In some regions, the majority of the detected victims are children.

16. There are no universally agreed estimates of the scale of the human trafficking problem. It is generally agreed, however, that responses to date have resulted in: (a) the identification of only a small proportion of trafficking victims, not all of whom are being assisted in line with their rights; and (b) the investigation and successful prosecution of an even smaller number of traffickers, often involving the targeting of individuals rather than networks, in particular, organized criminal groups.

17. Despite this, there are some clear areas of progress, including the widespread ratification of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the strengthening of legal frameworks at the national level. In 2000, when the Protocol was adopted, the majority of countries did not have legislation that specifically criminalized trafficking in persons. There are now 173 parties to the Protocol, 158 of which have criminalized most forms of trafficking in persons in line with the Protocol definition. The Report has further identified a clear correlation between the amount of time that a jurisdiction has had legislation on trafficking in persons in place and an increase in the implementation of that legislation.

18. The *Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants 2018* indicates that, at a minimum, 2.5 million migrants were smuggled for an economic return of \$5.5 billion to \$7 billion in 2016. This is a minimum figure, as it represents only the known portion of that crime. It is equivalent to the amount spent by the United States of America (some \$7 billion) or the European Union countries (some \$6 billion) on humanitarian aid globally in 2016. According to the Study, thousands of migrants are killed, tortured and exploited every year. The smugglers' profits stem from the fees they charge migrants for their services. The fees are largely determined by the distance of the smuggling trajectory, number of border crossings, geographical conditions, means of transport, use of fraudulent travel or identity documents and risk of detection.

<sup>6</sup> Note that the Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre region is larger than the UNODC South-Eastern Europe region; it additionally includes Greece, Hungary, Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova, Romania and, especially important in terms of numbers, Turkey.

19. There are currently three major smuggling routes into Europe. The central Mediterranean route starts in North Africa, most commonly Libya, and ends in Italy, usually in Sicily. The eastern Mediterranean route connects the Turkish coast to various Greek islands, while the western Mediterranean route, which is either a maritime or overland route, starts in Morocco and ends in Spain. For most of the migrants and refugees who use those routes, being smuggled across the Mediterranean is just one part of a longer journey that may have started in South-West Asia, the Horn of Africa, West Africa or elsewhere.

20. In response to the situational analysis, UNODC continues to increase Governments' capacities for analysing and interpreting data and information in order to identify trends and patterns in, and flows of, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants and strengthen the knowledge and skills of law enforcement and judicial authorities to better identify, investigate and prosecute cases involving those crimes. The work of UNODC is aimed at enhancing Member States' ability to respond to transnational organized crime; address and counter trafficking in accordance with relevant United Nations conventions; strengthen criminal justice regimes; and prevent and combat terrorism in accordance with the rule of law.

### **Illicit financial flows, money-laundering and asset recovery**

21. Money-laundering is the process through which proceeds of crime are introduced into the legitimate economy. Being a global business, it is intricately linked to other forms of organized crime, providing both a means of transacting other elements of a criminal enterprise and serving as a stand-alone criminal activity that generates its own revenue. UNODC estimates that the amount of money laundered globally is approximately 2.7 per cent of global gross domestic product, or approximately \$1 trillion.<sup>7</sup>

22. Furthermore, from 2010 to 2014, 2.2 per cent of the estimated proceeds of crime were provisionally seized or frozen and 1.1 per cent of the criminal profits were ultimately confiscated at European Union level, according to a report prepared by the Asset Recovery Unit of Europol in cooperation with the asset recovery offices of States members of the European Union.<sup>8</sup> The scale of money-laundering in South-Eastern Europe is difficult to assess but it is thought to be substantial. According to Europol, money-laundering in the region occurs primarily through investment in real estate and private companies operating in the tourism, construction, trade, hospitality and retail industries. For example, in Serbia alone, approximately 1.7 billion euros are laundered annually, costing the Serbian economy between 3 and 5 per cent of gross domestic product.<sup>9</sup> A 2013 report on Serbia notes that the country is at high risk, with high vulnerability both in the financial and non-financial sectors.<sup>10</sup>

23. Analysis of progress reports produced by the European Commission suggests that South-Eastern Europe has made progress in combating money-laundering, including through broader justice sector reform efforts. One effect of that process has been the removal of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the list of jurisdictions that have strategic deficiencies in their frameworks for combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism and proliferation.<sup>11</sup> Relevant legislation may be in place, but its implementation can be improved, tangible results in the fight against economic and financial crimes are still not visible and the number of convictions remains low, in particular, in relation to cases that involve both drug trafficking and the laundering

<sup>7</sup> UNODC, *Estimating Illicit Financial Flows Resulting from Drug Trafficking and other Transnational Organized Crimes* (Vienna, 2011).

<sup>8</sup> European Law Enforcement Agency (Europol), "Does crime still pay? Criminal asset recovery in the EU – survey of statistical information 2010–2014" (The Hague, 2016).

<sup>9</sup> European Commission, "Project for capacity-building of the Directorate for Confiscated Property and improving the system of criminal asset confiscation", 10 January 2013.

<sup>10</sup> Jelena Pantelić, *National Risk Assessment of Money-Laundering in the Republic of Serbia* (Belgrade, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> Financial Action Task Force (FATF), "Improving global AML/CFT compliance: ongoing process", 23 February 2018.

of criminal proceeds. Serbia is the only country in South-Eastern Europe that remains on the list of jurisdictions identified by the Financial Action Task Force as having strategic deficiencies for which they have developed an action plan with the Task Force.<sup>12</sup> However, at its most recent meeting, in February 2019, the Financial Action Task Force determined that Serbia had completed its action plan and an on-site visit was recommended before the next meeting in June 2019.

24. The six Western Balkan jurisdictions have, to a large extent, transposed the European<sup>13</sup> and international<sup>14</sup> standards on asset recovery into their national legislation. However, the implementation of those standards remains weak. Moreover, a lack of statistical data makes it difficult to effectively assess the progress made in the region in relation to the seizure and confiscation of proceeds and instrumentalities of crime. Nevertheless, European Commission staff working documents for the region demonstrate that the implementation of various asset recovery provisions and the ability of local authorities to seize and confiscate assets remain low. It is therefore necessary for the Governments of the region to establish the confiscation of proceeds and instrumentalities of crime as a strategic priority in the fight against financial crime, corruption, organized crime and terrorism.<sup>15</sup>

25. The flagship initiative of UNODC in that area is described in paragraph 3 of the present report. Furthermore, UNODC has contributed to improving Member States' capacity for addressing money-laundering and countering the financing of terrorism in South-Eastern Europe and fostered regional cooperation in those areas through partnerships with the Federal Financial Monitoring Service of the Russian Federation and the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime, with the training of 68 officials in 2018. Those activities have assisted in strengthening the overall response to illicit financial flows in South-Eastern Europe.

### Corruption

26. In its 2018 report on the current and potential candidate countries in South-Eastern Europe, the European Commission noted that corruption remained widespread, despite ongoing efforts to align legal and institutional frameworks with the European Union *acquis* and European standards. Strong and independent institutions were crucial for preventing and tackling corruption, in particular, at a high level, and for conducting more effective investigations and prosecutions that resulted in final court rulings that were enforced and that included dissuasive sanctions. More transparency was needed in the management of public funds, in particular, at all stages of public procurement – an area particularly prone to corruption.<sup>16</sup>

27. All five countries of the region have completed the first cycle of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which assesses States parties' status of implementation of chapters III and IV of the Convention. The implementation by Bosnia and Herzegovina of chapters II and V of the Convention was reviewed in the first year of the second cycle and the executive summary of the review was published on 14 December 2018. Albania and North Macedonia are currently under review, while the reviews of Montenegro and Serbia are planned to start in 2019 and 2020.

<sup>12</sup> FATF, "Improving global AML/CFT compliance: ongoing process", 22 February 2019.

<sup>13</sup> European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters; Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters; Second Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters; Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime; Criminal Law Convention on Corruption; Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto and the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

<sup>15</sup> European Commission, "Commission staff working document: Albania 2018 report" document SWD(2018) 151 final, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> European Commission, "2018 communication on EU enlargement policy", document COM (2018) 450 final, p. 2.

28. Throughout the review process, the reviewing experts identified gaps and technical assistance needs related to various provisions of chapters III and IV of the Convention in all five countries of the region. The five States parties were all recommended to improve legislation and strengthen capacity concerning the extradition of persons, mutual legal assistance and law enforcement cooperation. Further recommendations were addressed to Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the protection of reporting persons and the freezing, seizure and confiscation of proceeds of crime; and to North Macedonia regarding the transfer of sentenced persons and criminal proceedings, joint investigations and the use of special investigative techniques.

### **Terrorism and violent extremism**

29. Since the end of 2017, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant has suffered several setbacks, leading young men and women who had left their country or jurisdiction to join it to return, thus spreading the threat of terrorism to other regions, including South-Eastern Europe. According to the latest Europol report on the terrorist threat in the European Union, one of the main threats to the jurisdictions of South-Eastern Europe is the return home of foreign terrorist fighters. It is estimated that approximately 1,000 persons from South-Eastern Europe travelled to the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq between the end of 2012 and 2016 (women and children constituted almost 35 per cent of that group), approximately 300 of whom have already returned.<sup>17</sup> Citizens from Kosovo,<sup>18</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and North Macedonia have provided most of the foreign terrorist fighter contingents and are now particularly exposed to the threats posed by returning fighters. Although the region has not suffered from any attacks conducted by returning combatants, those combatants raise serious security concerns, not only for the Balkans but also for Western Europe, as many returnees have dual citizenship or links to their diaspora communities across the continent.

30. According to the Organized Crime Threat Assessment for South-Eastern Europe 2018, terrorism remains a serious threat in the region and appears to be linked primarily to the return of foreign terrorist fighters, as well as to individuals who self-radicalize and may commit lone wolf attacks. Two such deadly attacks were carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2015. In addition, in November 2016, security forces in Albania and Kosovo thwarted an attempted attack targeting the Israeli national soccer team during a World Cup match in Shkodër, the second largest city in northern Albania, indicating the possibility of a future large-scale act of terrorism in the region. However, most countries and territories in the region have adopted stricter laws against the participation by their citizens in foreign conflicts and have, as a result, seen a sharp drop in departures to conflict zones such as Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic since 2015 or thereabouts.

31. In the period under review, UNODC has been delivering a project, funded by the European Union, on strengthening the criminal justice response to foreign terrorist fighters in the six Western Balkan jurisdictions, and released a manual on foreign terrorist fighters for judicial training institutes in South-Eastern Europe in December 2017.

## **C. Drug prevention and treatment**

32. The Balkan route is a key route for trafficking, not only in heroin but also in cocaine and cannabis. As a result, drugs and associated criminal activities are prevalent throughout the region, a situation that is further negatively affected by structural factors that have existed for decades. The economic and social upheaval

<sup>17</sup> Vlado Azinović, *Extremism Research Forum: Regional Report – Understanding Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans* (London, British Council, 2018).

<sup>18</sup> All references to Kosovo in the present report should be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

experienced across South-Eastern Europe in the 1990s and early 2000s created a high-risk environment for drug abuse and the health and social consequences of that abuse. As far as responses to drug abuse are concerned, alignment with the European Union has brought new challenges related to the transposition of the European Union *acquis* into national legislation, especially in the area of justice and domestic affairs. However, it has also created new opportunities for cooperation and discussion on approaches to addressing drug abuse, associated health and social issues and responses. The jurisdictions of South-Eastern Europe have endorsed the European Union statements on the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly and on the 2019 Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Our Actions at the National, Regional and International Levels to Accelerate the Implementation of Our Joint Commitments to Address and Counter the World Drug Problem and are in broad alignment with the approach taken by the European Union to preventing drug abuse.<sup>19</sup>

33. One particular challenge is the availability of reliable data as a precondition for policymaking and the sharing of such data within the region and with other actors such as Europol and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction. The establishment of drug observatories in each jurisdiction is crucial for the collection of baseline data. According to the Centre, the situation varies across the region, with some countries and jurisdictions having already set up national observatories while others have only adopted the legal basis for such observatories.<sup>20</sup> The Centre has expanded its activities in recent years from States members of the European Union – where it monitors developments in the drug situation using a variety of methods, including epidemiological indicators and the collection of data on drug treatments – to the European Union candidate countries or potential candidate countries in the Western Balkans. The goal of that expansion is to align the drug monitoring systems of those countries and jurisdictions with the European Union monitoring framework. Part of that work has been carried out in partnership with UNODC.

34. Treatment services for substance use disorders tend to be provided by a combination of government programmes and community service organizations and generally require improvement across the region.<sup>21</sup> Drug treatment services are mostly provided by psychiatric hospitals; few or no services are offered by general practice clinics, with the exception of Serbia. Specialist drug treatment is difficult to access in Albania and Kosovo, with the existence of just one Government-supported specialist drug treatment centre supplemented by services provided by non-governmental organizations.

35. UNODC is very active in South-Eastern Europe in the area of drug demand reduction. UNODC prevention work is focused on improving and supporting national comprehensive systems to prevent drug use and is based on the integration of evidence-based strategies that are consistent with international standards on drug use prevention; the collection of drug use prevention data, related research and evaluations; and the development of evidence-based tools and guidelines to prevent drug use, in particular, among young people, young adolescents and high-risk groups.

36. The activities carried out during the review period supported the region's efforts in the area of drug use prevention while ensuring the development of gender-responsive approaches. Governments received assistance in defining, developing, implementing and expanding evidence-based prevention strategies, with notable progress made in four Member States, namely, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro,

<sup>19</sup> Council of the European Union, "EU-Western Balkans dialogue on drugs (18 April 2018): outcome of the meeting", document 8930/18.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> See EMCDDA, *Drug Treatment Systems in the Western Balkans: Outcomes of a Joint EMCDDA-UNODC Survey of Drug Treatment Facilities* (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2019).



North Macedonia and Serbia, with regard to the delivery of preventive interventions based on international standards.

37. One of the key UNODC initiatives in the area of prevention in South-Eastern Europe is the Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence programme – an evidence-based intervention developed by the Lions Clubs International Foundation and based on a methodological approach to developing the social and emotional skills of students, with the purpose of establishing good practices to prevent and delay the onset of drug use. The programme showed encouraging results in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. A total of 371 teachers received training and 7,600 students benefited from the programme in 144 schools across 25 cities in those four countries.

38. Other active UNODC programmes in the region include the Strengthening Families 10–14 programme, a social emotional learning programme, and programmes to support national strategies and action plans. UNODC has enhanced and supported drug dependence treatment assessments, data collection, monitoring and evaluation activities, research and the development of technical tools and evidence-based policies. UNODC has also promoted evidence-based capacity-building in the field of drug dependence treatment and care (including related infectious diseases) aimed at enhancing the Member States' prevention, treatment, reintegration and care services while ensuring the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes and the development of gender-responsive approaches. As a result, Governments are supported in the development and provision of access to evidence-based treatments for substance use disorders and sustained recovery services, with positive results recorded owing to the increased use of internationally recognized practices and policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia, among others.

#### **D. Recent UNODC regional initiatives for South-Eastern Europe**

39. Under the auspices of its Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe, UNODC supports regional and interregional law enforcement and multi-agency coordination and cooperation to tackle trafficking in drugs and other items and transnational organized crime. In particular, UNODC signed a memorandum of understanding with the Police Cooperation Convention for South-East Europe in April 2019 and a working arrangement with the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training in October 2018. Those agreements have further supported complementarity of action by UNODC in the region while avoiding duplication of efforts.

40. UNODC is also fostering interregional law enforcement cooperation between South-Eastern Europe and West and Central Asia, in particular, in the context of container control and the countering of illicit financial flows.

41. UNODC held an interregional meeting between South-Eastern Europe and West and Central Asia on building partnerships in countering illicit financial flows in Zagreb on 28 and 29 June 2018. The event was attended by more than 80 participants, including heads of drug control agencies, heads of financial intelligence units and other stakeholders from Afghanistan, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kosovo and, inter alia, members of the donor community, Europol, the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism, Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre – Centre for Security Cooperation, Western Union and banks. During the meeting, challenges to and prospects for interregional cooperation were addressed, an overview of the trends in and analysis of illicit financial flows along the three drug trafficking routes from Afghanistan was provided and the role of the private sector and other topics were discussed. The meeting not only contributed to the exchange of good practices

among participants from both regions but also raised awareness of the critical importance of cooperation at the regional and interregional levels and the need to support Afghanistan in its efforts to counter drug trafficking and organized crime. UNODC will continue to hold such meetings in the future.

42. Furthermore, UNODC continues to implement research initiatives, including through an innovative project entitled “Measuring and assessing organized crime in the Western Balkans”. Such initiatives are aimed at improving knowledge of trends and patterns in organized crime and supporting jurisdictions in the region in addressing the issue accordingly. Information on the development of a statistical framework for studying organized crime, the delivery of national technical group meetings and extensive data collection will be included in the next UNODC report.

43. Key UNODC publications in South-Eastern Europe for the period under review include:

- *Report on the Assessment of Drug Dependence Treatment Quality Standards for Drug Dependence Treatment Programmes in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*
- *Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Manual for Judicial Training Institutes in South-Eastern Europe*
- Final report on cultural adaptation of the Lions Quest Skills for Adolescents programme in Montenegro: material with recommendation for further use
- Results of the WHO/UNODC Substance Use Disorder Treatment Facility Survey
- Executive Summary: Bosnia and Herzegovina
- *Drug Treatment Systems in the Western Balkans: Outcomes of a Joint EMCDDA-UNODC Survey of Drug Treatment Facilities*
- *Independent formative in-depth evaluation of the Western Balkan Counter Serious Crime initiative (WBCSCi) in the context of the Integrative Internal Security Governance (IISG) mechanism including the European Union action: “Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) Multi-Country Action Programme 2017 – Support to the Western Balkan Integrative Internal Security Governance” (including the final evaluation brief)*

44. The Turkish International Academy Against Drugs and Organized Crime is a key partner of UNODC in South-Eastern Europe and beyond. The Academy has, in cooperation with UNODC, organized multiple training courses for Balkan law enforcement officers. This partnership will continue in the future.

### III. Eastern Europe

#### A. Introduction

45. UNODC formally launched a document entitled “Strategic partnership and programmatic actions in Eastern Europe” during a high-level side event at the sixty-first session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held in March 2018. The document was developed in close consultation with Belarus, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine and reflects the region’s priorities for action while ensuring complementarity with current and future initiatives of UNODC and its main regional partners in the areas of justice, security and development. The document also provides a road map for delivering expertise, technical tools and advisory services to enhance national and regional capabilities in order to prevent and counter the impact of organized crime, money-laundering, corruption, drug trafficking and trafficking in persons. The document constitutes the first strategic programme framework for the region, consolidates UNODC work and partnerships in the region and outlines both current initiatives and future prospects in an integrated and comprehensive manner.

## B. Organized crime and drug trafficking

46. The trilateral cooperation established between UNODC, Japan and the Russian Federation continues, with the provision of specialized training courses to counter-narcotics officers from Afghanistan and Central Asia within the framework of the regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries. That trilateral initiative was launched in 2012 and entered into phase VI in 2019. As part of the project, 12 training sessions were delivered to a total of 195 counter-narcotics officers (127 from Afghanistan and 68 from Central Asia) during the five phases completed in February 2019. The training sessions are delivered by the All-Russian Advance Training Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation (Domodedovo Training Centre), with the financial and technical support of the Government of Japan.

47. The trilateral cooperation was further expanded with the launch of a project to establish a counter-narcotics canine unit in Afghanistan in October 2018. Activity under the project commenced with a training course for 15 persons to become managers, chief handlers and administrative officers of the future canine unit to be established in Kabul. The training was held from 1 to 31 October 2018 at the Rostov Dog Training School for Operational and Search Activity of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation.

48. The above achievements have contributed to attainment of the wider global development agenda, in particular, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the Ministerial Declaration of 2019, whereby Member States committed to accelerating the practical implementation of the commitments made in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem; the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 high-level review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem; and the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly. The partners in the trilateral cooperation declared their continued interest in and support for the initiative through the signature, in Vienna on 12 November 2018, of a declaration on cooperation between Japan, the Russian Federation and UNODC to support the counter-narcotics efforts of Afghanistan.

49. A partnership project between UNODC and the Russian Federation on counter-narcotics training for Central Asia and Pakistan, launched in 2016 and aimed at further supporting specialized training for law enforcement officers and contributing to regional cooperation, entered phase III in 2019. As part of that project, eight courses were conducted at fixed sites in Domodedovo and Krasnoyarsk in the Russian Federation, with the participation of a total of 135 police officials (38 from Afghanistan, 13 from Pakistan and 84 from Central Asia), and nine mobile training courses were conducted in the Central Asian capitals, in which 186 police officials were trained.

50. The partnership project between UNODC and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on counter-narcotics training has continued to deliver specialized law enforcement training in West and Central Asia and Pakistan. Mobile training courses are provided by instructors from the States members of NATO, who travel to beneficiary countries to provide one- or two-week training courses on specialized drug enforcement topics. Courses at fixed sites are provided at the facilities of States members of NATO, including the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime, border services of Latvia and Ukraine and the Italian Central Directorate for Anti-Drug Services. Courses at fixed sites are usually provided to the combined group of trainees from all the beneficiary countries. The project ran for two years (2016–2018) and was then extended for an additional two years. Since 2016, 561 officers have been trained and a total of 51 courses have been held.

51. In view of the expanded cooperation and consistent commitment of the partners and in order to enhance the coordination, oversight and sustainability of the technical assistance delivered, UNODC launched, during the sixty-first session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, a database on law enforcement training for Europe, West and Central Asia. The database is aimed at improving the coordination and strengthening the oversight and sustainability of all law enforcement training activities conducted in the subregions. The database builds on the knowledge and capacity that has already been developed with regard to the monitoring of data on drug seizures, the dismantling of laboratories and arrests made in West and Central Asia.

52. In that context and on the basis of the results obtained from the delivery of law enforcement training, which strengthens Member States' capacity and enhances regional cooperation, at the sixtieth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in March 2017, the Commission adopted resolution 60/9, entitled "Enhancing the capacity of law enforcement, border control and other relevant agencies to counter illicit drug trafficking through training". In the resolution, the Commission, inter alia, called upon Member States to further strengthen their training for law enforcement and jointly implement training programmes through bilateral, regional and international cooperation, welcomed the efforts of UNODC to assist in the application of innovative methods of training of law enforcement officials and urged relevant international organizations, in consultation with UNODC, to provide financing and other support for the training of law enforcement officials in addressing and countering the world drug problem.

53. UNODC continued to provide support to the Republic of Moldova in strengthening interdiction capacity and border control through the Container Control Programme. Following the signing of a memorandum of understanding between UNODC and the Republic of Moldova, the project activities were implemented and completed in 2018. During the implementation period, the Port Control Unit at the port of Giurgiulesti was established and training was provided. The national counterparts expressed an interest in extending cooperation under the Container Control Programme, subject to funding availability. In that context, in 2018, the Moldovan national counterparts participated in training on strategic trade and export control and in regional forums on enhancing Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) capabilities in Black Sea Container Control Programme countries held in Ukraine in March 2018.

54. In January 2018, Ukraine and UNODC signed a memorandum of understanding that confirmed the participation of Ukraine in the Container Control Programme and the establishment of the Port Control Unit at Odessa Sea Port and the Air Cargo Control Unit at Boryspil International Airport in March 2018. In addition to the State Fiscal Service and State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, two new State law enforcement agencies decided to join the Container Control Programme, namely, the National Police and the Security Service of Ukraine.

55. Implementation of the Container Control Programme is under way in Ukraine and the port control units are demonstrating good results. Seizures made by the units include more than 17 kg of cocaine; 28.31 tons of precursors; 1 liquefied gas pump identified as a dual-use and export control good; and 708,650 packs of cigarettes.

56. In 2017 and 2018, UNODC continued to cooperate with the Belarusian International Training Centre of the Ministry of the Interior of Belarus in hosting national and regional joint meetings and training sessions on human trafficking, drug control, the health and social needs of people with drug use disorders, organized crime and money-laundering.

57. In 2016, UNODC, in partnership with the European Union, launched the Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants initiative in Eastern Europe for the period from 2015 to 2019. The project includes Belarus and Ukraine among the 13 partner countries and supports the implementation of strategic national efforts to counter trafficking and smuggling through an approach

that is focused on prevention, protection, prosecution and partnerships. As part of the initiative, UNODC, together with the National School of Judges of Ukraine, held several workshops on the development of the training curricula for judges on the qualification and other practical aspects of crimes involving trafficking in persons. Furthermore, UNODC conducted in-depth research on child trafficking in 2018.

58. UNODC, with the support of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, conducted three training sessions in Ukraine on investigations into cryptocurrencies and the darknet and money-laundering and terrorism financing regulation and supervision for representatives of the drug control and strategic investigations departments of the National Police, the National Anti-Corruption Bureau and the security sector. The training sessions conducted in 2018 were aimed at building capacities for investigating cryptocurrencies, preventing their misuse for the purposes of drug trafficking and money-laundering, seizing and confiscating criminal proceeds in the form of cryptocurrencies and cooperating with foreign competent authorities.

59. In January 2019, UNODC, in collaboration with the European Union Action Against Drugs and Organized Crime project, organized the first inter-agency technical working group meeting of Ukrainian forensic laboratories. Following the meeting, three national forensic laboratories – two from Kyiv operating under the Ministry of Justice and one from Kharkov operating under the National Security Services of Ukraine – have joined the UNODC International Collaborative Exercises programme.

### **C. Drug prevention and treatment, HIV treatment and care**

60. In Belarus, UNODC conducted a training session on a comprehensive package of HIV and hepatitis C services for people who inject drugs for 29 non-governmental organizations and community representatives in June 2018. Among key outcomes of the training, the post-assessment found that the workshop had increased participants' understanding of the decision-making process at the national level; the potential impact of drug policies; the importance of promoting human rights and access to harm reduction services; the planning and monitoring of activities and advocacy; and interaction between civil society organizations and international organizations. In that context, initiatives were also organized during 2018 that were focused on developing and implementing gender-responsive services for women and raising awareness of the issue of gender inequality and its consequences.

61. During 2017 and 2018, at the request of the Ministry of the Interior of Belarus, UNODC implemented a demonstration project on partnerships to improve access to medical and social services in Salihorsk District for people who inject drugs and who have come into contact with the legal system. Training sessions were organized for law enforcement officers and prosecutors, health-care and social workers, people with drug use disorders and civil society organizations. One of the outcomes of the training was the establishment of a referral mechanism for individuals who were registered with the Penal Enforcement Inspectorate of Salihorsk District Department of Internal Affairs to receive medical and social services related to the provision of prophylactics and the treatment of HIV and drug abuse.

62. UNODC supported the Minsk City Administration and the Ministry of the Interior of Belarus in establishing the Pomogut resource centre, launched on 18 October 2018 and intended for harm reduction service providers, people who inject drugs and their families. The centre's website is a unified source of comprehensive information on drug dependency prevention and treatment, harm reduction and HIV prevention, including international drug reports and research and study reports.

63. In 2018, at the request of the Ministry of Health of Belarus, UNODC and the World Health Organization organized a national consultation on the evidence-based treatment of drug use disorders through multi-disciplinary cooperation between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. UNODC agreed with the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Health of Belarus on a workplan

of activities for 2019 that includes the provision of technical assistance to promote international norms and evidence and ensure proportional drug policies and evidence-based prevention and treatment services for people with health issues related to drug abuse.

64. In the Republic of Moldova, UNODC continued to promote dialogue with law enforcement authorities with regard to HIV and injecting drug users. Technical assistance and capacity-building was provided to police officers through specialized training sessions, with a focus on ensuring a public health-based approach. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for HIV/AIDS in Eastern Europe has visited the Republic of Moldova twice in the past two years and emphasized that attention should be paid to prison settings, where the provision of harm reduction services is decreasing. Between 2016 and 2018, UNODC, with the support of Sweden and in cooperation with other United Nations agencies, has been providing normative and legal services, advocacy and capacity-building on treatment and harm reduction services for drug use disorder specialists, non-governmental organizations, the police and prison authorities. The next round of those activities is expected to continue until December 2021.

65. In Ukraine, during the period from May to August 2018, a series of train-the-trainer courses for lecturers at educational institutions and academies of the Ministry of the Interior of Ukraine were held. Key outcomes of the training included participants' increased understanding of the importance of critical partnerships with civil society organizations in providing harm reduction services, in particular, for persons who inject drugs. At the request of the Patrol Police Academy of the Odessa State University of Internal Affairs, a training session for cadets (60 students) was organized.

66. UNODC also contributed to improved cooperation between local police, health-care facilities, civil society organizations and HIV service providers in Ukraine in order to promote access to HIV prevention and care services among people with drug use disorders. A memorandum of understanding was signed by the national counterparts. UNODC organized, jointly with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the European Union Action against Drugs and Organized Crime project, the national conference on drug policy, which was held from 28 to 30 November 2018 with a view to promoting dialogue and the exchange of experiences among scientific, professional and political circles and to discussing evidence-based approaches. To support the introduction of opioid substitution therapy into prisons and at the request of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, UNODC organized, with financial support from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, a study visit to Lisbon in November 2019.

67. On Nelson Mandela International Day on 18 July 2018, UNODC, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine and the European Union Action against Drugs and Organized Crime project, held a seminar on raising awareness of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners at a prison in Kyiv Oblast. The seminar was attended by representatives of the prison administration and convicts. Particular attention was paid to legislative assistance, health care in prisons and capacity-building for prison staff; key issues in the context of ongoing efforts to reform the prison system in Ukraine.

#### **D. Recent UNODC regional initiatives for Eastern Europe**

68. In January 2018, UNODC conducted a regional technical consultation on implementing an HIV programme entitled "Guide on piloting UNODC implementation on HIV and stimulants" for people who use stimulant drugs. The consultation brought together national counterparts from Belarus, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine (including ministries of health, ministries of the interior, national police, researchers, monitoring and evaluation experts and civil society

organizations). The Guide was well received and participants stressed the need to adapt it to the countries' needs in the areas of stimulants and HIV.

69. UNODC developed a training module on gender mainstreaming in the monitoring and evaluation of HIV services for women who use drugs. The module was implemented in the form of a regional workshop for Belarus and the Republic of Moldova, held in Minsk in September 2018. The workshop focused on increasing the knowledge and capacity of national authorities for monitoring HIV services for women who use drugs and developing evidence-based action plans that streamline gender issues in HIV programmes for women who use drugs.

70. UNODC, in conjunction with the World Health Organization, organized the third regional meeting for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine within the framework of the study on community management of opioid overdoses, including the use of naloxone for preventing overdose deaths in Kyiv in October 2018. The meeting was aimed at building capacity and preparing national partners for the implementation of the project at the national level.

#### **IV. Security sector reform**

71. Within the framework of the joint action plan signed by UNODC and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2018, the Government of Belarus, in partnership with Slovakia in its capacity as Chair of the Group of Friends of Security Sector Governance and Reform, held the joint OSCE-UNODC regional workshop on security sector governance and reform and transnational organized crime in Minsk in November 2018.

72. The objective of the workshop, on the theme "The role of a well governed and accountable security sector in addressing transnational organized crime", was to provide a forum in which countries could share their experiences of undertaking reforms and strengthening the governance of their national security sector against a backdrop of transnational organized crime, such as trafficking in persons and drugs, illegal migration, cybercrime, corruption and terrorism.

73. The workshop resulted in a series of recommendations, including the organization of a follow-up session to implement joint actions related to improving border management through joint regional initiatives and/or the establishment of a regional network of practitioners, as well as the possibility of conducting joint regional threat assessments.

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