

**SECOND MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON DRUG TRAFFICKING ROUTES FROM AFGHANISTAN
“PARIS 2 – MOSCOW 1”**

MINISTERIAL SESSION
(Moscow, 28 June 2006)

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Participants in the Ministerial Session took note of the following observations:

- 1.1. In May 2003, the participants of the Ministerial Conference on *Drug Routes from Central Asia to Europe* agreed in Paris on the need for stronger and better coordinated action in border control and law enforcement and on a concerted strategic approach: The Paris Pact. This approach was subsequently endorsed by the G8 Evian Summit (June 2003) and the UN Security Council Consultations on Afghanistan (17 June 2003).
- 1.2. Since the summer of 2003, a two-pronged consultative mechanism has been working at operational and policy levels: Expert Roundtables identify action priorities for better border control, anti-trafficking measures, and new forms of regional and international cooperation. The Policy Group which operates at the strategic level then reviews these new proposals. Following endorsement, new action is effected by respective Governments, in direct cooperation with UNODC and all Paris Pact partners. During the last three years, the activities under the Paris Pact covered all three major trafficking routes from Afghanistan to Europe, i.e. the Southern route via Pakistan, Iran and further by sea and air, the Western Route via Iran, Turkey and the Balkans, and the Northern Route, via Central Asia and Russia.
- 1.3. The *Paris Pact* process has helped to identify a number of needs for the transit countries, such as promotion of operational contacts against illicit drug trafficking activities; support for the national inter-ministerial drug control coordinating bodies; creation of national drug intelligence units and national mechanisms for control of drugs used for licit medical purposes and for control of precursor chemicals; improvement of national forensic laboratory services; development of modern training techniques and other initiatives to strengthen law enforcement capabilities to interdict illicit drug traffic; organization of regional workshops to promote drug control cooperation with neighboring countries; elaboration of modern approaches to prevention of drug abuse.
- 1.4. The strong political commitment of the President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai and the Government of Afghanistan, to counter the drug crime threat and to increase eradication efforts are bringing about some encouraging results. However, further progress is dependent on many factors, including commitment and practical action at a provincial level.

- 1.5. In 2005, 87% of all illicit opium in the world was produced in Afghanistan. Opium poppy was cultivated on 104,000 ha, producing 4,100 tons of opium per year, or roughly 410 tons in heroin equivalent, – a staggering amount exceeding the potential illicit world consumption.
- 1.6. Also, the illicit opium economy continues to flourish in Afghanistan. Its estimated value of \$2.7 billion is equivalent today to 52 percent of the country's licit economy. As in previous years, the "lion's share" (\$2.14 billion) went to the traffickers, while the combined total profit of all opium poppy growers (\$0.56 billion) was in the range of 20 percent of the volume of the Afghan illicit opium economy.
- 1.7. The dynamics of opium economy in Afghanistan have resulted in two changes in production patterns: a major increase in quantity of opiates, and the growth of heroin processing inside Afghanistan. As a result, transit countries have seen a qualitatively new problem emerge as addicts turn to heroin use, exacerbating the domestic drug problem; and the HIV epidemics.
- 1.8. Between 70-90% of the heroin found in Europe has been produced in Afghanistan or processed, during the trafficking operations, from the Afghan opium. About half a million people have been involved, along the international trafficking routes, in the trade of Afghan opiates, ranging from large-scale crime cartels down to small groups of individuals. The turnover of illicit international traffic in Afghan-based opiates is estimated at over \$40 billion annually.
- 1.9. The traffic in Afghan opiates has taken the global proportions where virtually all states are influenced in some way. The implications are most devastating both in Afghanistan and in the transit states where drug traffic impedes the economic development and increasingly threatens to turn the transit countries into the consumers, due to the excessive supplies of Afghan heroin in transit.
- 1.10. While the traffic in Afghan opiates is destined primarily to the lucrative, main consumer markets in Europe, it considerably contributes to the growing spread of crime and drug abuse in countries and territories it transits and has serious implications for their legal, political, economic, and social stability. It also aggravates the problems that most of the transit countries are facing, such as institutional decay, political instability and corruption. Connections between drug traffickers and local organized crime in the transit countries reduce the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts, de-stabilize the process of reforms, and promote corruption which undermines the public's trust in government.
- 1.11. The international criminals, operating along the drug trafficking routes, attempt to penetrate and influence vulnerable economies, national politics, and, in some cases, foment nationalist strife and ethnic tensions. Through their illicitly acquired profits, they are able to nourish separatist ambitions and armed conflicts in the countries of transit. Many commodities, including firearms, are bartered for drugs along the most vulnerable trafficking routes.
- 1.12. The traffickers also make use of the licit trade for their illicit operations. According to the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH) container traffic is expected to double by the year 2012 compared with the 1999 figures. At present, more than 220 million sea containers move around the globe per year with approximately 90 % of the world's cargo shipped via container. It is well documented that the global trade supply chain mechanism is also used to smuggle Afghan-based drugs concealed in commercial cargos. Additionally, the

impact of terrorism further highlights the potential risks posed by the use of containerized cargo shipments and the importance of ensuring security.

- 1.13. Serious measures are required to counter the negative effect of the traffic in Afghan opiates on the transit countries and to address the problem in all its ramifications.
- 1.14. The Government of the Russian Federation - the current G8 Chair - hosted on 26-28 June 2006 a Second Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking Routes from Afghanistan (“Paris 2 – Moscow 1”) to further promote the *Paris Pact* process and to elaborate and recommend effective counter-measures.
- 1.15. On 26 and 27 June, the delegates in three working groups reviewed in depth:
 - (i) Border Control, Drugs and Precursors Trafficking;
 - (ii) Regional and International Cooperation;
 - (iii) Health and Social Issues;and formulated a number of concrete recommendations. These recommendations are submitted below for the attention and possible adoption by the participants in the Ministerial Session.

2. The Participants in the Ministerial Session reviewed and adopted the following recommendations:

1. Border Control, Drugs and Precursors Trafficking

1.1. Border Control

The vulnerability of borders is a major problem that requires stronger cross-border cooperation by the transit states and consuming countries, in addition to source countries, to counter trafficking both in drugs and precursors. Effective and integrated border control is crucial for successful law enforcement.

Border control should be viewed from a regional dimension, as the traffic in drugs and their precursors is passing not only across the borders between two given countries, but through entire regions.

In introducing measures to ensure effective border control, it is important to maximize the use of limited resources by adopting a focused, intelligence-led approach.

More effective control could be achieved by the promotion of inter-agency cooperation within each country to ensure that Police, Customs, Border authorities, Intelligence and Immigration Services work together in sharing information and conducting joint operational activities. In this regard, political commitment is required to ensure that agencies work together and that there was a match between political and operational priorities. This should be complemented by the development of international cooperation between the neighbouring states.

The deployment of international liaison officers has proved to be valuable in developing information sharing and operational law enforcement cooperation.

Recommendation: Countries should consider further strengthening the Foreign Anti-Narcotic Community (FANC). In this respect, the posting of liaison officers in border regions, not only in capitals, could prove particularly effective.

The role of regional organizations, such as the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and its Drug Control Coordination Unit (DCCU), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), was recognized in strengthening cross-border cooperation among transit countries, as well as with source countries.

It was highlighted that border control efforts at national, regional and international levels could be strengthened through the development of partnerships/effective working relationships with organizations and structures, such as Interpol, WCO, Europol, OSCE, CIS, CSTO, SCO, SECI Centre, Mini-Dublin groups, George Marshall Centre, NATO.

Other issues that should be considered in developing an effective Integrated Border Management Strategy include:

- Professional risk assessment
- Use of better detection techniques on all borders, *inter alia*, in controlling the movement of precursors
- Tackling corruption
- Developing cooperation between the border posts
- Provision of in-country training
- Signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), if required

Future Paris Pact expert roundtables should continue examining the situation on the borders along the trafficking routes. Based on the results obtained, corrective measures should be proposed, such as creation of mobile control units, establishing structures for information exchange and capacity-building for possible application of advanced law enforcement techniques, analysis and profiling, controlled deliveries and CD ROM enforcement training.

Attention should be devoted to the analysis of methods of concealment. Traffic in illicit drugs concealed in commercial cargos requires particular attention.

Priority should be given to corrective measures on the weaker borders. Uncontrolled or poorly-controlled borders. should be addressed.

The practice of holding regional consultations, such as that which took place in May 2006 in Doha, Qatar, should be pursued since it could help Paris Pact partners to broaden the international coalition against drug trafficking from Afghanistan and the trafficking in precursors in the opposite direction.

Joint Declarations similar to the one recently concluded by Iran, Pakistan, China and Afghanistan were useful in enhancing regional cooperation. Further cooperation agreements involving Afghanistan are encouraged. The “Good Neighbourly Relations” Declaration provides an appropriate framework for conclusion of such agreements.

International assistance towards the reconstruction and capacity building of the national border police and customs in Afghanistan is essential to support the Afghanistan’s border management and border infrastructure development. In addition, despite the efforts of the Tajik authorities to enhance

control measures along the Afghan border following the withdrawal of the Russian Border Service further assistance was required. This included the further training of Tajik border guards and enhancing the development of the liaison officers network. Additional measures included the development of mobile control units along the border and expansion of the laboratory analytical and sniffing dogs capacities.

As funding is now available, the UNODC integrated border control project for Iran should be launched as soon as possible, subject to approval by the Iranian Government.

It was underlined that legal trade could be a conduit for illegal trade on the same routes. Hence, agreements, such as TIR (*Transports Internationaux Routiers*) and ATTA (Afghanistan Transit Trade Agreement), are beneficial to stimulate trade. However, law enforcement agencies should still be in a position to control the negative aspects of the same trade and especially make use of risk management.

Recommendation: TIR and ATTA agreements should be revisited to include risk indicators and performance-based monitoring from a security point of view.

The establishment of Border Liaison Offices (BLO) was considered to be practical and viable in building trust and dialogue between border control agencies on shared borders, leading to their empowerment to act and respond quickly and in concert to requests for mutual assistance or information exchange without having to refer all decisions back to Headquarters.

The use of BLO would facilitate regular meetings between senior staff from both sides, growth of spontaneous information exchange about the movement of goods, suspects and vehicles across common borders; development of joint operations / patrols / surveillance of common trafficking targets.

Recommendation: With regard to the traffic in precursor chemicals used for the production of heroin, both in the drug transit countries and in Afghanistan, there was a need to encourage a systematic exchange of information on diversion of precursors into illicit channels. This could include targeting of specific declared consignments based on risk analysis, exchange of intelligence information, launching backtracking investigations in the event of seizures, conducting controlled deliveries.

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) activities to coordinate the international efforts to monitor and prevent the diversion of acetic anhydride, the main precursor chemical used in the production of heroin, under the auspices of Project “Cohesion” (the merger of operations “Topaz” and “Purple”) were highlighted.

Recommendation: Full support should be given to the efforts of INCB and the participating states and international organizations as regards Project “Cohesion” and the forthcoming operation “Transshipment” which is to take place in Central Asia in July 2006.

Recognition was made of the valuable results of the operation “Channel” conducted by the Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation (FDCS) together with the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), as well as the operation “Halide” which was very well organized by the WCO’s Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO) hosted by the Russian Federal Customs Service. The importance of coordination of these operations was emphasized. In this regard, it was recommended that the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC),

once operational, would be an important focal point for this type of operation, with INCB, FDCCS and other agencies. The participation of countries affected by the transit of drugs and precursor chemicals was encouraged in support of these operations.

Efforts by the Afghan Administration in seizing and destroying illicit consignments of precursors were noted.

The exchange of information on the international trade and consignments of chemicals and precursors that could be used in the production of heroin should be expanded and become a regular practice. Possibilities for organization of a coordinated international operation on the Afghan borders to stem the traffic in precursors into the country should be examined.

Training of law enforcement officials in precursor control should be a priority. The facilities of the International Training Centre in Domodedovo (Russia) and TADOC (Turkey) should be used to increase the level of knowledge of law enforcement staff as regards the profile and control of precursor chemicals.

Recognition of the positive initiative by the European Commission (EC) in launching a project aimed at strengthening regional cooperation in precursor control between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries was noted.

1.2. Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC)

Progress on the UNODC's efforts to establish a Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) was noted. The Centre has been designed to improve intelligence sharing and cooperation between law enforcement agencies of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, as well as of the Russian Federation and Azerbaijan in relation to drug trafficking from Afghanistan.

CARICC will host liaison officers from each of the participating countries and act as a focal point to facilitate effective information exchange and coordinate operational activities between the various law enforcement agencies in the region. It has been agreed at a high-level meeting in Tashkent in February 2006 that the venue for the Centre will be Almaty, Kazakhstan. Currently the building is occupied by another Government agency but one floor is to be handed over by the Kazakh authorities for UNODC to start renovation work by the end of June 2006. The remaining floors will be made available towards the end of 2006.

The CARICC Agreement has not yet been signed at high level by the participating countries.

Recommendation: Participating countries should consider taking urgent action for the high-level signing of the CARICC Agreement and for other appropriate actions to take place to ensure that the Centre is established and operational as a matter of priority.

The necessity of securing additional finance to ensure sustainability of the Centre and to consider increasing membership of CARICC to include Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and others was highlighted.

1.3. The Global Container Control Pilot Programme

The Conference noted developments in relation to the UNODC/WCO Container Control Pilot Programme Project. Project sites have been established in ports in Ecuador (Manta and Guayaquil) and Senegal (Dakar) with the formation of Joint Port Control Units comprising law enforcement officials from the Police, Customs and the port authorities. These Units are working with the business community to improve the identification of high-risk shipments in the flow of sea containers carrying legal cargo for imports or exports. Improved profiling capacities have been introduced to prevent the use of sea containers for illicit purposes such as the trafficking of drugs, weapons, explosives, human beings or terrorism, whilst avoiding disruption of legal trade. Some notable successes, particularly in relation to seizures of cocaine in Ecuador, have been made. The Programme is to be extended to ports in Pakistan and Ghana later in 2006.

2. Regional and International Cooperation

2.1. Drug Situation and Counter Narcotics Efforts of International Community in Afghanistan

High-level political commitment exists in Afghanistan towards countering the serious drug problem. Further support was required from the international community to assist Afghanistan in implementing its National Drug Control Strategy aimed at:

- targeting the traffickers
- creating alternative livelihoods for the growers of opium poppy
- building capacities for counter-narcotics institutions, including the border police
- reform of the criminal justice system
- raising public awareness
- reducing domestic demand for drugs
- providing treatment to drug users
- promoting participation of Afghanistan in regional cooperation activities.

The implications of the illicit drug economy in Afghanistan are devastating both for the country and for the transit states where drug traffic impedes the economic development and the reform process.

A holistic approach is required to contain the problem at its source - in Afghanistan, categorized by the integration of development and alternative livelihoods assistance with enforcement measures and coupled with the strengthening of governance, state institutions and the national capacity.

Alternative development should go hand-in-hand with the rule of law. Quick impact projects should be launched for creating job opportunities for the Afghan farmers. Irrigation systems and transportation infrastructures should be built to provide easy access to the markets for licit agricultural products. The support of India, Islamic Republic of Iran and other countries in the provision of alternative development activities was noted. Any development activities in Afghanistan should contribute, as far as possible, to counter-narcotics efforts in the country.

Attention should be particularly focused on developing better inter-agency coordination within the country to avoid duplication, on the activities at the provincial level and with the local administration, on the capacity building and measures against corruption.

While partnership with the lead nations in Afghanistan, such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Japan and USA is well underway, broader international effort is required to ensure effective counter-narcotics measures in Afghanistan, particularly in promoting regional and cross-border cooperation.

The “Good Neighbourly Relations Declaration” could greatly facilitate this task. In this context the Paris Pact Roundtable held in Dushanbe in April 2006 identified concrete measures to foster cross-border cooperation.

Further contributions to the “Counter-Narcotics” and “Law and Order” Trust Funds for Afghanistan are strongly encouraged. UNODC should continue implementing its technical assistance projects in Afghanistan and the region, as well as its surveys, analysis and research.

The Afghan-based drug problem and its implications for the security in the country are being fully taken into account by the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Among other things, NATO is supporting the Afghan Government to provide security and stability in the country. Moreover, NATO is assisting in the development of command and control procedures for effective liaison, coordination and de-conflicting of counter-narcotics efforts among the stakeholders, in training Afghan national security forces in counter-narcotics related activities, and in providing logistic and medical support to Afghanistan’s and the international community’s counter-narcotics agencies. NATO/ISAF is not, however, directly involved in the illicit crop eradication or other direct counter-narcotics effort in Afghanistan.

The Joint NATO – Russia Council Pilot Project has been designed to provide mid-level officials from Afghanistan and Central Asia with the possibility to acquire basic counter-narcotics skills. As the training proceeds, the Pilot Project will provide opportunities for coordination involving higher-level officials in the region, thereby promoting regional cooperation in counter-narcotics strategies. Training will be conducted by counter-narcotics experts from NATO member states and Russia, both through mobile training teams deployed in the region, and in three fixed facilities: Russia’s Domodedovo International Training Centre, the Turkish International Academy Against Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC), and Afghanistan’s Police Academy in Kabul.

Details of recent seizures of drugs and precursors made by the Afghan authorities were reported. However, no information had previously been communicated to Interpol about these operational activities. The importance of notifying Interpol and UNODC about seizures was emphasized.

Recommendation: *The Afghan authorities should ensure that details of drug and precursor seizures be communicated to the UNODC and to Interpol Headquarters through the National Central Bureau (NCB) in Kabul. It would also be beneficial to inform neighbouring states of the seizures.*

With regard to the wider region, it was proposed that further action was required, including the strengthening of cooperation among the transit countries and the pursuance of an integrated, balanced approach to law enforcement and demand reduction. In this respect, the support of the international community was necessary to assist transit countries to counter the problems they face.

2.2. Implementation and perspectives of regional initiatives on combating Afghan drugs, including law enforcement operations

The Working Group was informed about several regional initiatives, including the activities of the SECI Centre, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Russian Federal Drug Control Service (FDCS), Interpol, World Customs Organization (WCO) and the European Commission (EC).

Very concrete steps have taken place over the recent years to advance meaningful drug control. Indeed, current efforts and actions need to be strengthened in response to the substantial challenge posed by the drug trade.

In view of the various major initiatives taking place in the region, it was considered necessary to adopt a common regional strategy that would provide coherence and consistency to the various initiatives.

Recommendation: *A regional strategy should be considered between the member states and international organizations to ensure a more coordinated response to tackling the drugs problem.*

The Working Group acknowledged the close connection that has developed at times between international terrorism and transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking as well as the internationalization of trafficking and incorporation of several sub-trades such as human trafficking, small arms trafficking and other criminal activities. Reference was made to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) which noted this connection with concern.

Interpol reported on the difficulties experienced in facilitating Operation NOMAK in Central Asia. The operation had been initiated to identify smuggling methods, new trends and methods of concealment. Serious concern was expressed about the lack of success of this operation due to the failure of several of the project partners to supply post-seizure data to Interpol. The problems encountered in implementing this operation highlighted obstacles to providing information which needed to be overcome by the member states if CARICC was to be successful.

Recommendation: *Member states should ensure provision of timely data to Interpol and to CARICC, once established, to ensure proper analytical and operational support.*

With regard to Operation “Channel”, the most recent activities conducted in May 2006 by the Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation (FDSC) together with the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) have proved extremely successful in initiating and coordinating joint activities involving 14 countries. This positive operation resulted in significant seizures of drugs, precursor chemicals and firearms. Benefits also included the development of a high-level of trust between law enforcement agencies and cooperation leading to more efficient information sharing.

Recommendation: *Operation “Channel” should be continued. Expansion of the operation with the participation of additional countries should be encouraged.*

The US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) funded Operation “Containment” (otherwise known “Zaslon”) had proved of value in developing information exchange and building trust between participating law enforcement agencies. The first two operations had been successfully completed and it was proposed that Operation “Zaslon-3” should take place later in 2006. The information from this operation would be made available to CARICC, once the Centre was operational.

Examples of various European Commission activities and initiatives in the region were described. These included the work of Border Management Programme in Central Asia (BOMCA) in facilitating effective trade whilst introducing measures to prevent trafficking and the activities conducted under the Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP), the Southern Caucasus Anti-Drug programme (SCAD) and the Belarus – Ukraine – Moldova Anti-Drug programme (BUMAD).

It was also noted that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) was also engaged in activities to strengthen border control in the region.

Further emphasis was placed on ensuring professional training for law enforcement officers. The positive efforts of the Domodedovo International Training Centre in Moscow and the wide range of training services offered, including the training of many international law enforcement officials was recognized.

With regard to further promoting international cooperation and encouraging practical support between law enforcement authorities, the importance of ratifying and implementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime was emphasized. Moreover, to ensure that measures are taken to tackle corruption, the ratification and application of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption was considered essential.

Recommendation: Member states should take action to ensure ratification and effective implementation of both the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

3. Health and Social Issues

3.1. Drug Abuse: Prevention, Treatment, Rehabilitation

The increase in trafficking of opiates from Afghanistan has brought about a consequent increase in heroin use and addiction in neighbouring and transit route countries. Heroin addiction leads to increases in the prevalence and incidence of HIV/AIDS, fuels injecting drug use and acquisitive crime. Moreover, the HIV epidemic adversely impacts the economic well-being of communities. Against this backdrop, delegates welcomed the opportunity to discuss aspects of demand reduction within the broader agenda of the Paris Pact process. Proposals to include demand concerns into this process in the future were also addressed but there was no agreement on this issue.

Following a number of presentations there was general agreement that meeting the challenges of the twin epidemics of injecting drug use (IDU) and HIV/AIDS requires institutional commitment at the national and local levels, the involvement of civil society and the wider community in planning and implementation, the provision of training programmes for the acquisition of new skills, increasing the availability of a wide range of services, evidence-based practice, and the establishment of robust monitoring and evaluation systems.

Recommendation: If not already in place, States should devise and implement, comprehensive prevention, treatment and rehabilitation measures. These measures include:

- prevention of drug use and HIV, especially among young people, prisoners and other high-risk groups***
- provision and facilitation of access to effective drug treatment (including substitution treatment for opioid dependence) and, where necessary, antiretroviral therapy***
- establishment of effective outreach services to engage IDUs in HIV preventative strategies that protect them and their partners from exposure to the virus and encourage the uptake of drug treatment***

The issue of harm reduction was discussed, but there was no consensus on this point.

Participants recognized the role of mass media in raising awareness on the attendant risks of drug use and the benefits of targeted public information campaigns. A low level of awareness about the problems of drug use and HIV/AIDS among the general public, and inadequate knowledge about measures of prevention, often leads to discrimination and stigma.

Recommendation: States are encouraged to work in partnership with mass media to devise effective, consistent and targeted information campaigns.

The issue of data collection to gain knowledge about the extent of drug problem, on which to base appropriate responses, was highlighted. It was important to gain a better understanding of emerging trends and patterns on HIV, drug and alcohol use, adopting international best practice. Data collection was also essential to enable states to design appropriate interventions as a means for achieving significant and measurable results.

Recommendation: Countries should review, and where necessary, strengthen national data collection systems. National data collection systems should apply a range of standardised research methodologies including national household surveys and targeted research among drug users.

The importance of implementing effective drug prevention programmes was stressed. The point was also made that successful programmes should be culturally adapted to the local context, participatory, holistic and based on life-skills.

Recommendation: States are encouraged to implement comprehensive primary prevention, programs within the framework of their national strategies.

A number of participants made reference to the effectiveness of methadone treatment. Domains of success in methadone treatment include reduced heroin use, improved health and social functioning, reduced offending and HIV-risk behaviours. Despite the large literature on methadone - several thousand published studies covering various aspects of methadone maintenance - some governments, wary of the research findings, have declined to authorize the setting up of methadone programmes, even in the form of pilots. Taking account of this fact and noting the specific concerns of the distinguished Russian narcologist, some delegates stressed the need to ensure that the evidence base for methadone maintenance programmes is set out in greater detail.

Recommendation: As part of the ongoing debate in the region on the issue of methadone treatment, it is recommended that those advocating for the introduction of pilot methadone maintenance programmes, should strive to ensure that the effectiveness of these programmes is better articulated.

Recommendation: Following up on the suggestion made by the Russian narcologists, further consideration should be given to the idea of prescribing methadone to IDUs suffering from AIDS.

Other recommendations arising from the working group are as follows:

Recommendation: The experience of NGOs in the field of drug prevention was considered by the Working Group to be of great value. States should consider working closely with and following the practices of NGOs in exploiting the adoption and application of new technologies.

Recommendation: States should ensure that civil society is encouraged to take a much more active role in helping to devise drug/HIV policies.