

COMPASS Policy Paper

THE US AND UK EFFORTS AGAINST DRUGS PRODUCTION IN AFGHANISTAN (2001-2021)

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
BACKGROUND.....	3
ANALYSIS OF THE ISSUE	3
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	22
REFERENCES.....	23

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THE US AND UK EFFORTS AGAINST DRUGS PRODUCTION IN AFGHANISTAN (2001-2021)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main purpose of this analytical paper is to analyze the anti-drug policy of the US and UK in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. This policy paper will demonstrate the role of the US and the UK as the nation's responsible for the counter-narcotics operations in Afghanistan. The article is divided according to US strategies in Afghanistan. Each section examines the role of the US and UK and the ineffectiveness of their operations.

The threat of drugs from Afghanistan has not been exhausted to this day. Afghanistan remains one of the world's leading suppliers of drugs. On the one hand, the article draws attention to the US and UK's fight against drugs. During the US presence in Afghanistan, a campaign was launched against drugs. The United Kingdom, which has suffered more from Afghan heroin than any other EU country, has been involved in the drug's war. Despite the efforts of these two actors, no comprehensive strategy has been developed to generate drug-free solutions. The policy brief examines the actions of both the US and the UK from 2001 to 2021. Four periods may be distinguished: The strategy of non-intervention, ban strategy, alternative activity strategy, period of former President Trump. Particular attention is paid to the last point, the period of former President Trump, under which anti-drug fight was completely derailed. This was dictated by US, that has been tired of putting forward initiatives that did not bring the expected results for more than 20 years.

Considering the efforts of international actors in the fight against drugs in Afghanistan, attention is drawn to the extent of the impact of this threat on the countries of Central Asia. The geographical location of the Central Asian countries and the common extended borders of the three countries (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan) with Afghanistan make them vulnerable to drug trafficking. The transit of drugs through the countries of Central Asia undermined peace in the region. In that connection, in addition to the threat of drugs to the countries of Central Asia, measures to counter those threats have been studied within the framework of the Collective Security Treaty Organization. Thus, the drug menace is not only regional but global. With the coming to power of the Taliban, the issue remains unresolved.

Keywords: *Drugs, strategy, US, UK, politics, Central Asia, counter-narcotics, Afghanistan, Helmand*

Abbreviations: *CSTO, Collective Security Treaty Organization; ISAF, International Security Assistance Force; UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; SOC, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation; CIS, Commonwealth of Independent States; IMU, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan; SCO, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation; CARICC, Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre; UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; GDP Gross domestic product*

BACKGROUND

The United States operation in Afghanistan began in 2001 in response to events 9/11. The main purpose of the American operation was to destroy the terrorist organization - Al-Qaeda. The operation was called «Indestructible Freedom». The International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF) was established in accordance with Security Council resolution 1386 of 20 December 2001. ISAF is a NATO force. From the start of the operation, the goal was to eliminate the threat of terrorism and religious extremism. As a result, the strategy did not initially include an anti-drug strategy for the United States in Afghanistan.

Under the Taliban, opium cultivation had been permitted by law since 1996-2001. Drug money allowed the Taliban to wage war on the Northern Alliance*¹. At the same time, the cultivation of opium by peasants saved them from hunger. Since the establishment of the interim Government of H. Karzai in 2001, the drug situation had not improved; on the contrary, it had significantly worsened.

For more than 20 years, the United States has not achieved the total elimination of Al-Qaeda; on the contrary, another transnational terrorist group, ISIL-Khorasan, has emerged. On the issue of drugs, 20 years have passed without a US counter-narcotics strategy. Interest in the fight against drugs has declined year after year. At that time, the countries of Central Asia are suffering from the transit of drugs through their territory. A significant proportion of the drugs are in the hands of local drug traffickers, resulting in an increased demand for drugs among the region's population. Now that the United States has withdrawn from Afghanistan, the drug problem will remain on the agenda of the Central Asian countries.

ANALYSIS OF THE ISSUE

The drug threat as a challenge to the whole system of international relations

International drug trafficking, drug trade, drug-related crime, and the drug threat in general are now one of the most serious global challenges to humanity. Drug abuse, drug trafficking, violence and growing corruption affect millions of people around the world. They are not only destroying lives, but also threaten the entire social fabric and even the stability of governments. Drug-related problems increasingly affect various countries in most regions of the world regardless of national borders and social structures. This menace threatens all states regardless of their geographic location, political

*a military alliance of groups that operated between late 1996 to 2001 after the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Taliban) took over Kabul and The Northern Alliance fought a defensive war against the Taliban regime

orientation or level of economic development. The production and transit of drugs have now become a cross-border, global threat to humanity in a wide range of areas. The irreparable damage their use inflicts on the physical and mental health of a nation is common knowledge. More recently, drugs have become an instrument of international politics, a transnational factor of destabilization of the world political system. In the 1990s, a new threatening trend emerged in the world: areas of illicit drug production and transit increasingly coincided with areas of armed conflict. Drug trafficking, along with arms trafficking and international corruption, has become a major factor in the criminalization of international relations. Cooperation between states in the fight against this type of crime began more than a century ago. An example of this is the conclusion in Brussels in November 1906 of the International Agreement on the Adoption of Uniform Methods for the Manufacture of Strong Drugs. Then, by 1912, the Hague Conferences had developed principles that shaped the main directions of international control of illicit drug trafficking.

Shortly after the end of World War II, in 1946-1953, additional protocols were signed to modify and supplement the Hague agreements. The most important document defining the international legal framework to combat illicit drug trafficking was the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, which predetermined the use of narcotic drugs exclusively for scientific and medical purposes. ***In 1988, the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances was adopted***, which paid attention to the confiscation of proceeds from the sale of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, materials and equipment for their production². In spite of the fact that there has been a unification of norms, the drug trade has not been eradicated. Of particular importance in this regard is the situation in Afghanistan, which today can well be described as catastrophic for the entire world community. Moreover, the drug problem is directly connected with the on-going armed confrontation in the country, the fight against Islamic extremism and international terrorism, and the prospects for restoring stability in the entire Greater Middle East. Afghan drug trafficking threatens security at the local, regional and global levels. Afghanistan not only serves as the main source of illegal opiates but is also one of their main victims. The situation is further complicated by the fact that drug threats and drug trafficking patterns are not static in nature, but are dynamic and constantly changing directions, methods, nature and scale.

The UK and US position on the drug threat

The problem of the fight against drugs is of concern to the international community. Afghanistan provides **over 80%** of the world's heroin and opiate supply, and this supply is growing steadily. It was

² United Nations Convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (1988) Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://www.unodc.org/pdf/convention_1988_en.pdf

the main source of income. According to UN data, crop area (in the country) increased by 37% in 2020.³

In this context, it should be noted the assistance of the international community, which began to be traced after the start of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001. The 9/11 event marked the convergence of the positions of the US and the European Union (EU). The UK supported the actions of the US in conducting a military operation in Afghanistan. Thus, the US and the EU were drawn into the fight against many threats emanating from Afghanistan. One of these threats was the fight against drugs, in which the special role was given to the US and the UK.

2021 sums up the American operation in Afghanistan. However, neither UK nor the US was able to eliminate this threat. For more than 20 years, the US has failed to eradicate this problem, spending about **\$9 billion on it**.⁴ On the contrary, since the beginning of the military operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan in October 2001, the amount of opium produced has increased several times. In 2013, it was double the highest recorded during the Taliban in 1999.

The US has taken the next steps, which are aimed at combating drugs.

1. In a new report, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) claims that the US has spent **\$8.94 billion** to fight illicit drugs in Afghanistan since 2002.
2. The US has established the following funds, which have been earmarked for combating narcotics in Afghanistan. These include US Department of **Defense Counter Narcotics Fund (DICDA)**, **Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF)**, **Economic Support Fund**. The Afghanistan Security Forces Fund is primarily used to expand the Afghan National Army and Police, as well as the **Counter Narcotics Police in Afghanistan (CNPA)**, and support the **Special Mission Wing (SMW)**. **It should be noted that** the Special Mission Wing cooperates with Afghan Ministries of Defence and Interior in counter-narcotics operations.
3. The US co-operated directly with Afghanistan's Ministry of the Interior: established the Counter Narcotics Ministry as part of the Ministry. This was also a US initiative.
4. Policy, judicial reforms and goals to establish justice in the country.
5. Although a 3-tiered system has been implemented, 3 agencies are involved: **USAID** focuses on civil law issues; INL funds programmes sought improvement the criminal justice system as a whole, including police training; and **INL** funds the Ministry of Justice (DOJ) Senior Federal

³United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime . World drug report 2021. New York , 2021. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/WDR21_Booklet_3.pdf

⁴Rasmussen Sune Engel and *Zamir Saar and James Marson (2021)*, Taliban Move to Ban Opium Production in Afghanistan, The Wall Street journal, Aug. Published on 28.08.2021 at URL <https://www.wsj.com/articles/taliban-afghanistan-heroin-ban-opium-production-11630181316>

Attorney Programme in Kabul, which provides advice and assistance on law reform as well as training, mentoring and support to the Afghan Counter Narcotics Prosecution Task Force and police. But as has become apparent, no agency has been tied to counter-narcotics.

This suggests that the West, led by the US and the UK, did not particularly try to eradicate this problem, since drug production did not directly pose a threat to them. In particular, their statements, strategies that were developed, somehow remained on paper. From the very beginning of the US campaign, there was no single line in the fight against drugs. The main emphasis was constantly placed on the destruction of terrorist cells. The rise in drugs remained a secondary issue of less concern to the US. The UK, which suffers the most from drugs, also has not been persistent in addressing this problem. Britain's image in Afghanistan was overshadowed by its war in that country, so it met with resistance from the local population. But after that, the UK did not try to attract the opinion of the world community, did not make any alarm about the destruction of crops. It was the lack of coordinated efforts between the US and UK that further affected the drug situation.

Three strategies are identified to combat drugs in Afghanistan, which changed every time with the arrival of a new head of government in the White House

1. *The strategy of non-intervention*
2. *Ban strategy*
3. *Alternative activity strategy*⁵

No matter how pompous they may sound, in fact, none of the strategies turned out to be effective. The goals that were described in the strategies were not implemented. After each failure, neither the US nor UK tried to rethink their policies. Instead, both were increasingly fencing off this problem.

The role of the US and UK in the fight against drugs at the beginning of the war in Afghanistan

"The strategy of non-intervention" (2001-2002): The essence of the strategy boiled down to non-interference in the fight against drugs. America shunned the fight against drug production, focusing on the fight against terrorism. Drug production amounted to 185 tons in 2001⁶ and 3400 tons in 2002⁷. This suggests that in the context of political fragmentation, the amount of drugs has increased dramatically. Despite the fact that the entire Afghan campaign was tied to the programs and strategies

⁵ Coyne Ch. and Hall-Blanco A. and Burns (2016), S. The War on Drugs in Afghanistan. Another failed Experiment with Interdiction, The Independent Review, v. 21, n. 1, Published on Summer 2016 at: <http://ppe.mercatus.org/publication/war-drugs-afghanistan-another-failed-experiment-interdiction>

⁶United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2002). World drug report 2001. New York , 2002. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://www.unodc.org/pdf/report_2001-06-26_1/report_2001-06-26_1.pdf

⁷United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. World drug report 2002. New York, 2003. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://www.unodc.org/pdf/report_2002-06-26_1/report_2002-06-26_1.pdf

of the US, the UK also took an active role in it. At the first stage, the UK was dragging behind itself, the US was passive, pushing drug production to the last level.

According to the 2002 Bonn Agreement, the UK was designated as the drug control officer. The UK drug policy was based on the same principles as that of the US. It was based on a compensation program for the destruction of drug crops⁸. For the UK, of all European countries, the problem of Afghan drugs was the most acute. In the early 1990s, Afghan heroin accounted for 90% of all heroin sold in the United Kingdom⁹. Of all the countries in Europe, the UK is the leader in the consumption of drugs of the opiate group, and the problem of heroin addiction is very acute. Therefore, the interest of the British side in the fight against drugs in Afghanistan was fully justified. The UK took responsibility for Helmand province, where the most drugs were produced in Afghanistan.

In this region, the UK found itself in a difficult situation, meeting resistance from the rebels. First, in Afghanistan, the UK was portrayed as an invader, which the rebels took advantage of to play off the peasants against British policy. The removal of the governor of this province by the UK enraged the Afghans, who turned against the British. The UK did not have enough troops to fight back the insurgents. As a result of these mistakes, the Helmand operation failed.

Summing up the measures taken to combat drugs at the first stage, we note that the US possessing all the resources, did not want to pump funds into the fight against drug production. The UK faced a number of problems that prevented it from carrying out anti-drug activities. The first problem was that Afghans still had fresh memories of Britain's wars in Afghanistan. Their second mistake was to remove the governor of Helmand, who, in the UK's opinion, would not be able to destroy the opium fields. But it was this governor who destabilized the situation that prevented Britain from fighting drugs. This was the second problem. The third problem was the increase in the number of rebels against British soldiers. As a result, Britain had insufficient troops to suppress the rebellion. These problems eventually led to difficulties in implementing the fight against drugs.

Thus, the UK was unable to implement its plans to counter drug proliferation. The first phase largely determined the strategy of the UK and the US. The initial negative side of their policy was that the two states did not coordinate their actions, nor did they combine their efforts. Fragmentation in the actions of the two states had an impact on the further advancement of their initiatives. While the world's attention was focused on the terrorist threat, the anti-narcotics agenda was relegated to a secondary

⁸Bjelica J.(2018) From bad to bombing: US counter - narco M in policies in Afghanistan / Afghanistan analysts network. Published on 15/01/2018 at: <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/reports/international-engagement/from-bad-to-bombing-us-counter-narcotics-policies-in-afghanistan/>

⁹Burke B. (2002) Afghan drug lords set up heroin labs / The Guardian, Published on 11.08.2002. at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/aug/11/afghanistan.jasonburke>

role. In an environment of weak central authority and state fragmentation, it was very difficult for international actors to form even a theoretically effective strategy against drug production. Counter-narcotics required a centralised and concentrated effort, which in the Afghan case was difficult to achieve.

The significance of the banning strategy

Banning strategy was developed in 2003 and lasted until 2009, before Barack Obama. It was during this period that the actions of the States in the fight against drugs became more active. The United States has banned drug production. To this end, the United States began implementing training programs and providing the necessary equipment and intelligence to the IRA law enforcement agencies. At the same time, cooperation between the American military and law enforcement agencies was established. Within the framework of this cooperation, anti-drug raids were carried out to destroy the crops of the opium poppy. Between 2002 and 2009, the US gave permission for the military to participate in the fight against drugs. However, none of these measures have yielded results. In 2004, the amount of drugs produced in Afghanistan exceeded 4,200 tons¹⁰. In 2005, this number dropped to 4,100 tons¹¹.

Thus, during this period, the US Ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad developed the first US strategy to combat drug production in Afghanistan. This document contained the following requirements:

1. elimination and destruction of poppy crops;
2. a ban on its cultivation;
3. judicial reform;
4. informing the population of Afghanistan;
5. introduction of alternative development programs

In particular, the US put great emphasis on the implementation of programs that involve alternative development - the refusal of poppy production¹². But the basic conditions of the fight against drugs, prescribed in the strategy, were not implemented. This prevented the international community from discontinuing heroin production. Also, another weak point in the strategy was the lack of a mechanism for the implementation of these conditions. The US was unable to interact with the local population in

¹⁰ Afghanistan opium survey (2004). Cultivation and production // UNODC and Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Ministry of counter narcotics, p. 1. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://www.unodc.org/pdf/afg/afghanistan_opium_survey_2004.pdf

¹¹ UNODC announces major reduction in 2005 opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan (2005). Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2005/afg277.doc.htm>

¹² Counternarcotics : Lessons from the U. S. Experience in Afghanistan/Sigar (2018). Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: <http://fileserver.idpc.net/library/SIGAR-18-52-LL.pdf>

the fight against drugs. Despite the fact that by 2006, the United States Agency for International Development allocated up to 75% of its budget to agricultural development in Afghanistan, as well as to alternative development programs¹³, the opium fields continued to bloom.

By 2007, the international community, in particular the UK and the US, were discussing a method for destroying drug crops from the air, which had previously been used by the US in Colombia. The UK maintained the position that destruction from the air would have negative consequences for the peasants and lead only to temporary success¹⁴. his strategy was also doomed to failure, as the views of the two main actors diverged. The US initiative to eradicate opium poppy crops in Afghanistan was not supported by UK. This proposal was opposed by the President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai¹⁵. However, despite the contradictions between the subjects, the total volume of destroyed drug crops amounted to 19 thousand hectares in 2007. Crop eradication has not been effective in reducing opium cultivation in most provinces. International donors: US and the UK donated 18 provinces 34, up to \$2 million for development and reconstruction. The British side supplemented its activities with a PR campaign among Afghan peasants, in which drugs were presented as something contrary to the norms of Islam¹⁶.

However, eradication of poppy crops was complicated for hostile peasants, corrupt provincial governors, and well-armed local militias who actively defended the poppy fields.

Thus, the anti-drug operation also failed in the second stage. On the one hand, there was a contradiction in the positions of the UK and the US. Second, renewed aerial spraying of chemicals has undermined efforts to achieve a unified counter-narcotics strategy. Third, after the United States decided to stop fighting drugs, all other countries, including the United Kingdom, followed suit.

Despite all attempts of jurisdiction in fight against drug trafficking, in Afghanistan, drug production continued to increase. It was clear that the measures were ineffective. Theoretically, legal framework of counter-narcotics was effective. But in practice, under the conditions of Afghanistan's fragmentation and humanitarian catastrophe, it proved to be unsustainable. Against the backdrop of a complex political, economic and humanitarian situation in the country, there were attempts to strengthen the central government apparatus that should have stopped the intra-Afghan crisis from worsening.

Distinctive features of the alternative strategy

¹³ Ibid. p. 25.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 99.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Gavrilis G. (2010). The good and bad news about afghan opium / Council on foreign relations, Published on February 4, 2010 at: <https://www.cfr.org/expert-brief/good-and-bad-news-about-afghan-opium>

"Strategy for alternative activities" (2009-2016): Now, over 10 years in a war-torn country, the US had to demonstrate to community that they had a clear interest in their fight against drugs. The arrival of Barack Obama to the White House or demanding the revision of the overall strategy to combat narcotics in Afghanistan. The new strategy included the following: providing Afghan farmers with legal income; development of programs to provide them with alternative seeds to opium poppy; removing US military from crop destruction; imposing an operation to destroy opium crops on local authorities.

And this strategy also did not bear fruit. Drugs grew and entered the global market. Its export earnings accounted for **15%** of Afghan GDP¹⁷. Therefore, the manufacture of an alternative crop was not acceptable in the context of the ongoing protracted war.

This strategy differed from the previous two in that it focused on rural development, thus targeting drug control. During this period, the US stopped vomiting crops with chemicals. Nevertheless, its shortcomings were also identified. The US has failed to translate all actions and programs into reality.

As noted by A.P. Baryshev, during the period of Barack Obama, the US refused to conduct anti-drug campaigns¹⁸. Their refusal was due to the fact that depriving the peasants of income would lead to increased terrorism in the country. Again, the US, paying tribute to the fight against terrorism, turned a blind eye to drug production.

The US also tried to re-shift responsibility for drug production to its partner - the UK, which tied the fight against drugs to the fight against terrorism, fuelled by the proceeds of the drug trade. The UK has traditionally kept its wrestling at Helmand. Since 2012, against the backdrop of a reduction in American troops, interest in the fight against drugs has weakened. Gradually, the US shifted this task to the Afghan leadership.

In 2013, the US has not moved on a step forward. Only, what they have done, is the formation of *"Kandahar Food Zone"*, aimed at the reconstruction of agricultural sector. \$45.4 million were allocated to this program. The main goal of the initiative is to reduce the cultivation of opium poppy in Kandahar province. By that time, the UK also stopped conducting anti-drug operations in Afghanistan.

Thus, a picture emerges in front of us that, despite the fact that in the first years of Barack Obama, the anti-drug policy of the US and the UK underwent some changes, in general, no significant changes

¹⁷ Coyne Ch. and Hall-Blanco A. and Burns (2016), S. The War on Drugs in Afghanistan. Another failed Experiment with Interdiction, The Independent Review, v. 21, n. 1, Published on Summer 2016 at: <http://ppe.mercatus.org/publication/war-drugs-afghanistan-another-failed-experiment-interdiction>

¹⁸ Baryshev A. P.(2011). Sovremennaya strategiya SSHA i NATO (v kontekste problem nacional'noj bezopasnosti Rossii). — Moskva, OGI. 248 s. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at http://militera.lib.ru/research/baryshev_ap01/index.html

were observed. The misguided fight against drugs, the lack of mutual agreement and interaction between the US and the UK hindered the reduction of drugs in the country. On the contrary, its production grew at a rapid pace. The third stage also ended in failure.

Gradually, with the reduction of the international military contingent, an increase in drug production was observed. Since 2014, the US has completely ceased to be involved in the fight against drugs. In 2014, the volume of drugs produced in Afghanistan amounted to 6,400 tons¹⁹. However, in 2015, opium crops fell sharply. The reason for the reduction was not anti-drug policy, but climatic conditions, such as drought and lack of water²⁰. This confirms the idea that Barack Obama, moving away from the drug issues, focused on the fight against terrorism.

It may be noted that there is no consensus in the academic community on Obama's new anti-narcotics policy in Afghanistan. As part of the new US counter-narcotics strategy, it was decided to definitively move away from the idea of spraying chemicals from air and to disband the centralised counter-narcotics force. On the law enforcement side, specialized counter-narcotics institutions such as *the Central Narcotics Directorate and the National Counter-Narcotics Unit have shown increasing capacity, but this has been severely hampered by corruption within the Afghan government.*

It is important to note that, against a background of military drawdown, the US shifted drug control to Afghan units. There are several factors explaining the halt of the US efforts in opium eradication: 1) the US military contingent was being reduced, 2) inability of demolition of opium 3) fragmentation and corruption of local authorities.

Transformation of US anti-drug policy under President Donald Trump

With the advent of the Trump administration, US policy in Afghanistan has undergone changes. The new President decided to increase the US military presence in Afghanistan to 3,500 troops, bringing the total number of US forces in Afghanistan to 14,500. The main emphasis was placed on the fight against terrorism²¹. If strategies were still sounded before 2016, then with the arrival of Donald Trump in the White House, statements on the fight against drugs completely slipped from the political lips of the leaders. From this period, there is complete indifference to the growth of drugs in Afghanistan. Neither scientific nor public circles discussed the ineffectiveness of the US anti-drug policy, the question of

¹⁹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2015) . World drug report 2014. New York , 2015. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr2014/World_Drug_Report_2014_web.pdf

²⁰ Afghanistan opium survey (2015). Cultivation and production // UNODC and Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Ministry of counter narcotics. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Afg_Executive_summary_2015_final.pdf

²¹ Neelesh Moorthy (2014) Obama increases US troops to remain in Afghanistan past 2016, The Poynter Institute, Published on 06.07.2021 at: <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/promises/obameter/promise/1096/end-war-afghanistan-2014/>

revising this policy was not raised, no proposals were sounded. The situation looked like Washington had completely forgotten about its anti-drug policy.

The struggle had the drug from a speech the US chapter. Since then, the US has completely forgotten its anti-drug policy. Recent reports from UNODC have noted that drug production has grown dramatically in recent years. In 2017, Afghanistan produced 9,000 tons, which was a world record²². In 2018, there was already a decrease in the volume of manufactured drugs to 6.400 tons. The reason for the decrease was again natural and climatic factors²³. According to Sigar's 2018 report, the US spent a total of \$ 1.46 billion for alternative development programs since 2002 to 2017. Another \$938 million were allocated by the American leadership over the same period to eradicate opium poppy crops²⁴.

In 2018 SIGAR issued a special report on the used anti-drug strategy of the US in Afghanistan.²⁵ The report noted that one of the reasons for the failure of the fight against drugs in Afghanistan is the lack of coordination and interaction between departments. Another reason was that the American establishment is not committed to the fight against drugs. The report emphasizes that USAID's anti-drug efforts have had little effect.

Also in 2019, by the decree of ex-President A. Ghani, the ministry for the fight against drugs was disbanded. This state reform did not change the situation in any way, as it was heavily influenced by corruption, and could not become a regulatory body in the fight against drugs.

The US has worked closely with the UK in the fight against drugs. However, the US did not have a coherent policy aimed at destroying opium in Afghanistan. Even in the most active period of the struggle from 2002-2005, the US did not achieve significant results. The states did not show activity, since drugs do not pose a threat to the US due to the remoteness of Afghanistan from the US borders. As for the UK, its policy also failed, further UK became passive in the Afghan direction. Another key factor in the low efficiency in the fight against drug production in Afghanistan is the poor understanding of international actors about the situation in the country from the very beginning of their anti-drug campaign.

Thus, the fight against drugs appears to be declarative. The US has not done enough to eradicate opium in Afghanistan. Secondly, the peasants gave preference to the cultivation of opium due to the well-functioning system of its marketing. With regard to US initiatives to grow alternative crops, they also

²² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2017). World drug report 2017. New York, 2018. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://www.unodc.org/wdr2017/field/Booklet_1_EXSUM.pdf

²³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime . World drug report 2018. New York, 2019. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://www.unodc.org/wdr2018/prelaunch/WDR18_Booklet_1_EXSUM.pdf

²⁴ Counternarcotics : lessons from the U. S. Experience in Afghanistan / SIGAR, 2018. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: <http://fileserv.idpc.net/library/SIGAR-18-52-LL.pdf>

²⁵ Ibid. p.7.

proved to be ineffective during the anti-drug operation in Latin America. Drugs are used by the US to undermine stability in the region, increase corruption in the countries of Central and South Asia and the CIS countries. This, in turn, meets national interests, the formation of controlled chaos in the Eurasian space.

The drug threat from Afghanistan to Central Asia

If, before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the drug route ran through Iran, then, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, a new route, called the north through the countries of Central Asia, emerged. Central Asian countries are therefore directly affected by the threats emanating from Afghanistan. One such threat is drug trafficking from Afghanistan. However, the countries of Central Asia are heterogeneous, so the extent of the drug threat varies according to the geographical location of the countries. Countries bordering Afghanistan are more vulnerable to the drug menace. The north of Afghanistan is the leading producer of drugs, which is a matter of concern to the countries of Central Asia. The increasing volume of illegal transit and trafficking in Afghan drugs, the high rate of drug abuse, the spread of HIV and the increase in crime are common problems in many of the countries affected.

As of the mid-1990s, the main routes from Afghanistan through the CIS countries were approximately:

1. Afghan Badakhshan - Gorny Badakhshan - Osh - Sumgait, (Azerbaijan), reprocessing; - Bosnia, Croatia - Western Europe;
2. Badakhshan - Osh - Volga region - Moscow - Estonia - Sweden;
3. Badakhshan - Dushanbe - Bombori, Kobuleti (Georgia), reprocessing - Adjara - Turkey;
4. Khorog - Murgab - Osh - Ganja (Azerbaijan) - Moscow - Shauliai (Latvia) - Europe;
5. Mazar-i-Sharif-Termez-Shali (Chechen Republic) - Nakhichevan (Nagorno-Karabakh) - Turkey;
6. Mazar-i-Sharif - Termez - Samarkand - Ganja - Dagestan - Shali (CR) - Moscow - Shauliai;
7. Mazar i Sharif - Termez - Samarkand - Ganja - Dagestan - Karachai - Circassia - Abkhazia - Romania

The northern route now lies mainly through Afghanistan - Tajikistan - Kyrgyzstan - Kazakhstan - Russia - Europe. The route through Turkmenistan to the Caspian Sea has become secondary. Afghan heroin enters the Balkans through Iran - Turkey - Balkan countries - Europe. As we can see from the list of countries, drugs are transported through almost all four Central Asian countries, excluding Kazakhstan. However, the northern route remains more attractive, and Russia remains a major consumer of Afghan drugs.

The two states that are becoming the bridge linking Afghanistan are Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan share 972 kilometres of common borders²⁶. Drugs are smuggled into the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic through numerous trans-shipments:

1. Kyzyl-Artsky: Khorog - Osh - Murgab district of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast;
2. Altyn-Mazar: Rushan Plateau - Pamir - Zaalai Range - Chon-Alai Valley (Osh Region);
3. Batken: Jergetal-Garm-Batken-Kadamjay districts of Batken province;

In addition to the traditional routes, the following are also established:

1. Osh - Batken - Jalal-Abad oblast of Kyrgyzstan - Suusamir valley of Kyrgyzstan - Talas oblast of Kyrgyzstan - Zhambyl oblast of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
2. Osh - Batken - Jalal-Abad region of Kyrgyzstan - Toguz-Toruz region of Kyrgyzstan - Naryn region of Kyrgyzstan - Issyk-Kul region (Tup region) of Kyrgyzstan - Almaty region of Kazakhstan.

The situation in Tajikistan has enabled drug traffickers to break into Kyrgyzstan through Gorno-Badakhshan. Thus, the «Kyrgyz corridor» became the transit corridor and trans-shipment base for the transportation of drugs to Central Asia and other CIS countries, as well as to Europe and the US.

In this context, Tajikistan is not in the best position. For example, Badakhshan province, which borders Tajikistan, experienced a steady increase in the area under cultivation from 200 hectares in 2008 to 6,298 hectares in 2016²⁷.

The province of Jawzjan, bordering Turkmenistan, has been taken over by drug traffickers. In the province closest to Turkmenistan - Badghis, a high growth rate of 2,983 hectares (an increase of 152%) and 35,234 hectares (an increase of 184%) has been observed²⁸.

In the face of the aggravation of the Afghan factor, the modernized security structures of the country play an important role in containing external spoilers and in strengthening the security potential of Tajikistan, but the role of the 201st Russian military base is also important, and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, of which Tajikistan and Russia are members. The Afghan factor emphasizes the need for Tajikistan and Russia to constantly improve and strengthen the southern borders of the Tajik State.

²⁶ Rasplyazhenie Pravitel'stva Kyrgyzskoj Respubliki, 2016 Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/preview/ru-ru/216567/10?mode=tekstekt>

²⁷ Amanbekova Sh. (2019) Afganskiy narkotrafik i problemy regional'noj bezopasnosti v Central'noj Azii, Postsovetskie issledovaniya. T.2. № 3, p.1103-1110, Published on October 2019 at: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/afganskiy-narkotrafik-i-problemy-regionalnoy-bezopasnosti-v-tsentralnoy-azii>

²⁸ Obzor proizvodstva opiya v Afganistane v 2016 g.– Rezhim dostupa. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: <https://riss.ru/analitvcs/35773/>

For the period 2018-2020, \$5.4 million was allocated for the renewal of the Drug Control Agency's material and technical base, for its structural expansion through the creation of territorial units, for the training and retraining of personnel, to provide material support to the employees of the service²⁹.

Both the CSTO and the Russian Federation have drawn attention to the security of the Tajik-Afghan border, for if drug trafficking is stopped in Tajikistan, it will automatically eliminate any problems on the Tajik-Kyrgyz border.

In 2020, the law enforcement agencies of Tajikistan seized 2,425 kilograms of narcotic drugs - 788 kilograms or 40 per cent more than in 2019. Of this amount, 183 kilograms of drugs were seized by the DEA³⁰. However, measures related to customs control and enhanced border surveillance are insufficient. Opium is easily diverted to Tajikistan.

Thus, drug trafficking in Central Asia has a negative impact on regional security environment:

1. Drug trafficking leads to corruption in government and the growth of the shadow economy. Smuggling is part of the underground economy. This is exacerbating economic problems in Central Asian countries. The shadow economy will be a barrier to the development of legitimate industries.
2. In addition, the transit of drugs could fuel terrorist groups. In general, organized crime may increase.
3. Drug use will lead to diseases such as HIV/AIDS
4. The drug mafia was teaming up with public authorities and using bribery methods to get tons of drugs through checkpoints. This reinforces corruption in public administration
5. Drug trafficking is one of the sources of terrorist groups such as IMU.
6. Drug trafficking is becoming an existential threat to Central Asia. One example is Kyrgyzstan, threatened by «narco-aggression», «narco-expansion», «intervention drug addiction». In Kyrgyzstan, the role of the drug-trafficking clan in the 2010 riots cannot be minimized. They seek to take power in their own hands. Drug dealers maintain political ambitions³¹.

The fight against drugs in Central Asia is carried out at both the national and regional levels. The most active regional drug control organizations are the SCO and the CSTO.

²⁹ Majtdinova G (2021). -Rossijskoe sotrudnichestvo po podderzhaniyu stabil'nosti v Central'noj Azii: obshchie ugrozy bezopasnosti i vektory vzaimodejstviya, Valdaj Club, Published on 20.05.2021 at: <https://ru.valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/tadzhiksko-rossijskoe-sotrudnichestvo/>

³⁰ Godovoj otchyot Upravleniya OON po narkotikam i prestupnosti Regional'noe predstavitel'stvo v Central'noj Azii (2020 Accessed on 10.11.2021 at:

https://www.unodc.org/documents/centralasia/2021/ROCA_Report/2021.09.30_ROCA_AR_2020_RU_web.pdf

³¹ Zelichenko A.L. (2003) Afganskaya narkoekspansiya 1990-h godov i problema nacional'noj bezopasnosti Kyrgyzstana. – Bishkek, S. 5-6? Published on 10.09.2003 at: <https://www.dissercat.com/content/istoriya-integrirvaniya-kyrgyzstana-v-mezhdunarodnyi-protsess-protivodeistviya-afganskoi-na>

Within the framework of SCO, the following steps have been taken:

1. In 2004, it was decided to establish the SCO Coordinating Council - Afghanistan, which brings together the participating countries' efforts to control border territories and drug trafficking³²
2. In 2019, the operation «Web» was carried out on interdiction of drug supply channels. In this context, attention is drawn to the prevention of the use of Internet resources and virtual payment systems in the field of drug trafficking, and to the enhancement of the effectiveness of joint action by the competent authorities to combat illicit drug trafficking. According to preliminary data, since the beginning of the operation, 6 tons of 422 kg of narcotic drugs, including drugs, have been seized from illicit trafficking in the territory of the SCO³³.

In contrast to the CSTO, the SCO is developing a mechanism for countering the drug threat through information cooperation: monitoring of the Internet, networks and websites that openly post information on prescriptions for the collection of narcotic substances. However, this mechanism faces difficulties. States do not always share complete information on the basis of their, political expediency and national security considerations.

However, there are obstacles in the way of the struggle, which are reflected in the fact that drug trafficking is not only from the south to the north, but also from the north to the south. From Europe «heavy» synthetic psychotropic substances are transported to Central Asian countries.

Unlike the CSTO, the SCO does not cooperate with non-member Turkmenistan in combating drugs. The fact that Turkmenistan remains uninvolved in the process of combating drugs may hinder the overall fight against drugs in Central Asia.

CSTO is also involved in drug interdiction in Afghanistan. In 2010, the CSTO requested the United Nations to make the drug threat an international threat.

Unlike the US, which was less interested in fighting drugs in Afghanistan, Russia, as the core of the CSTO, is more interested in fighting Afghan drugs. This is because Russia is a major consumer of Afghan heroin.

The following steps have been taken within the framework of CSTO to suppress drugs:

³² Protokol SHanhajskoj organizacii sotrudnichestva i Islamskoj Respubliki Afganistan o sozdanii Kontaktnoj gruppy SHOS–Afganistan (2014), 17 iyunya 2004 goda, Oficial'nyj sajt SHOS Published on 17.06.2004 at:

<http://infoshos.ru/ru/?id=95>

³³ Bor'ba s nezakonnym oborotom narkotikov v regione SHOS vyshla na novyj uroven': provedena Mezhdunarodnaya antinarkoticheskaya operaciya «Pautina» (2019) Published on 07.12.2019 at:

<http://rus.sectSCO.org/news/20190712/564151.html>

1. In 2005, the CSTO had established the Coordinating Council of Heads of Competent Authorities for Combating Illicit Trafficking, the main purpose of which was to develop basic mechanisms for drug-interdiction solutions.
2. Within the framework of this organization, the operation «Canal» on the suppression of drugs, elimination of the drug raw material base, channels of distribution of drugs of the cannabis group, as well as psychoactive substances of synthetic origin by the competent authorities of the CSTO member States is carried out. In 2019, more than 11 tons of drugs were seized during the operation.
3. Also since 2012, tactical exercises of anti-drug departments and internal affairs agencies of CSTO member States have been held «GROM». In 2015, during the «Grom» exercise, the focus was mainly on drug interdiction in the border zone of Tajikistan with Afghanistan.³⁴
4. During a training exercise in 2017, a drug laboratory was discovered in Moscow. The results of the 2017 exercise differ from previous ones in that the internal affairs and emergency agencies were also involved in the process.
5. In 2014, the Anti-Narcotics Strategy for the period 2015-2020 was adopted, the main goal of which is to drastically reduce by 2020 the scale of illicit drug trafficking and non-medical drug use in the States participating in the CSTO³⁵.
6. There has been a shift from ad hoc joint activities to day-to-day work. Subregional and local stages have been held under the conditional names «Canal-South» and «Canal-West», «Canal-East». The CSTO is conducting these exercises in connection with the events in Afghanistan in order to strengthen emergency preparedness. This means that the attention of the CSTO has been drawn to threats related to the infiltration of terrorist and extremist groups. Since ISIL-Khorasan is in the north of Afghanistan, CSTO is concerned about regional security and the threat of terrorism and religious extremism. The fight against drugs has become a secondary task in the face of the threat of terrorism.

On a positive note, Russia, as the nucleus of the CSTO, is cooperating with Turkmenistan. However, the representatives of the Russian Federation have repeatedly noted that the Turkmen authorities are somewhat isolated on this issue: they do not always reply to official letters, and sometimes they cancel meetings with international representatives without giving reasons for their actions³⁶.

³⁴GROM-2015. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at:

https://odkbcsto.org/training/other/v_tadzhikistane_27_avgusta_nachnutyia_antinarkoticheskie_ucheniya_grom_2015_gosu_darstv_chlenov_odkb-5001/

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶ISAF commander congratulates Ministry of Interior for likely world's largest seizure of narcotics, Published on 11 June 2008 at: <http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/pressreleases/2008/06-june/pr080611-246.html>

Inclusion in the Collective Rapid Reaction Forces of special units of the anti-drug departments of the Russian Federation, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. This type of cooperation will further strengthen the capacity of three States to properly interdict the transit of drugs.

In addition, during operation «PROXY» the sites on which recipes for the preparation of narcotic substances were placed were discovered in order to detect cyber-threats. This also covers the information environment.

The CSTO Permanent Council has been actively working with the United Nations on drug-related issues since 2016. However, CSTO and United Nations contacts are mainly focused on the threat of terrorism and extremism.

One of the weak links is that the CSTO's primary task also remains the fight against terrorism and extremism. This is evidenced by the military exercises conducted annually in Central Asian countries. On October 23 S.G. in the Republic of Tajikistan «Kharbmaidon» at the polygon 20 km from the Tajik-Afghan border took place the final stage of exercises «Interaction-2021», «Search-2021» and «Echelon-2021», directed to joint operations on localization of the border armed conflict³⁷.

The Regional Office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking and psychotropic substances and their precursors - CARICC.

The following steps have been taken in cooperation between the two bodies:

1. In 2020, 15 border offices were opened at border sections between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, and Tajikistan and Afghanistan³⁸.
2. A positive development was the fact that in 2020 Turkmenistan was involved in the initiative to establish border offices. The Bureau for International Fight against Drugs and Law Enforcement of the State Department of the United States of America financed the border crossings «Farap» (on the border with Uzbekistan) and «Serhetabad» (on the border with Afghanistan)³⁹.

³⁷V Tadjikistane sostoyalsya zaklyuchitel'nyj etap sovmestnogo ucheniya «Vzaimodejstvie-2021» i special'nyh uchenij «Poisk-2021», «Eshelon-2021» (2021) Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://odkb-csto.org/news/news_odkb/v-tadjikistane-sostoyalsya-zaklyuchitelnyy-etap-sovmestnogo-ucheniya-vzaimodeystvie-2021-i-spetsial/

³⁸Godovoj otchyot Upravleniya OON po narkotikam i prestupnosti Regional'noe predstavitel'stvo v Central'noj Azii (2020). Accessed on 10.11.2021 at:

https://www.unodc.org/documents/centralasia/2021/ROCA_Report/2021.09.30_ROCA_AR_2020_RU_web.pdf

³⁹ Ibid.

3. Together with UNODC, 12 operations were conducted on the borders of Central Asian countries in 2020, during which four organized criminal groups were intercepted; Over 235 kg of drugs were seized⁴⁰.
4. Since 2004, a programme on container control has been established with UNODC and the World Customs Organization (WCO). Groups were created on conroles that operate in the sea port «Aktau» and dry port «Altynkol» (Kazakhstan), in the dry port «Bishkek» and dry port «Osh» (Kyrgyzstan), in the dry port «Dushanbe-2», dry port «Nizhny Panj», dry port «Khorog» and dry port «Khujand» (Tajikistan)in the sea port «Turkmenbashi» and dry port «Ashgabad» (Turkmenistan), in the dry port «Chukurbashi», dry port «Angren» and dry port «Alat» (Uzbekistan). In addition, air cargo control groups were opened at the international airport «Almaty» in Kazakhstan, the dry port «Batken» in Kyrgyzstan, the dry port «Farap» in Turkmenistan, the dry port «Yallama» and the dry port «Airit», as well as at Tashkent International Airport in Uzbekistan.
5. As a practical part of these control groups, cooperation has been established through an interregional network of customs and port control groups. Thanks to regional cooperation, the GPC in Osh made several seizures in cooperation with the GPC of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, including the seizure of 127 344 capsules of the drug «Regapen» («Pregabalin»)⁴¹.
6. In addition to these initiatives, mobile teams are being established in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. In particular, in Uzbekistan. The Government of Japan provides \$2.3 million to support Interdepartmental Mobile Groups in Uzbekistan. The MMG is composed of members of the State Security Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Customs Committee. The purpose of mobile teams is to suppress drugs and prevent illicit trafficking in narcotic substances. In Kyrgyzstan, the establishment of mobile teams was funded by Russia⁴².
7. UNODC and CARICC have gained experience in online courses, training and retraining as part of the NATO-UNODC Drug Control Project. During these joint initiatives, 30 law enforcement officers from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan were trained⁴³.
8. In 2020, UNODC strengthened the institutional and operational capacity of the Anti-Drug Trafficking Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic (NDLP).
9. One of the advances was the establishment of the Analysis Centre under the Service for Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

Such an analytical centre should be established in all States, and there is a need to advance the initiative to establish such an analytical centre in the CSTO.

Thus, the multi-level level fight against drugs must be maintained with a view to their elimination. In addition, current realities dictate the need to continue the fight against drug trafficking in Central Asia. Drug interdiction efforts should be coordinated within CSTO and SCO. The CSTO's focus on terrorism must also be turned to the threat of drugs. For the destruction of drugs will deprive terrorist groups of their profits. The complete elimination of drug transit was a complex task, as drug traffickers linked to State authorities were involved in the process.

Conclusions

Summing up the results of the US anti-drug policy in Afghanistan, we highlight the following points:

1. All strategies were not adapted to implementation, there was no mechanism for applying the norms of strategies to life,
2. The fight against drugs has become ineffective, judging by the data on the permanent increase in the volume of drug production in the Afghanistan after the outbreak of hostilities with the participation of the *ISAF*.
3. Also, the US showed no interest in the fight against drugs, all statements are declarative in nature.

With regard to the threat of drug trafficking from Afghanistan to Central Asia, CSTO remained interested in combating drugs. While the US and UK have moved away from the fight against Afghan drugs, the CSTO is still interested in preventing Afghan heroin from entering Central Asia. It should be noted that the CSTO member States have neither the intention nor the resources to launch anti-drug initiatives in Afghanistan itself. CSTO was endeavouring to combat illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs in Central Asia. This very pragmatic approach, taking into account the interests of the member countries, makes it possible to outline the range of issues in which the CSTO will be competent. Nevertheless, states should not reduce their activities in the fight against drugs within the framework of the CSTO, since, to date, the CSTO and the SCO were most interested in suppressing the supply and distribution of drugs. The conduct of anti-drug operations within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization means that the membership of that organization is wider than that of the Collective Security Treaty Organization. The inclusion of India and Pakistan, which are directly affected by Afghan drugs, could expand the range of players in the fight against drugs. International organizations such as UNODC and CARICC are mainly involved in the financing and construction of border posts and the training of specialized agencies.

We also need to take into account the fact that, with the US withdrawing and all counter-narcotics programs in Afghanistan scaled down or suspended, In the light of the growing humanitarian crisis and the freezing of funds by the Government of Afghanistan, opium cultivation may increase. This would lead to their spread to neighbouring countries, particularly Central Asia. The threat of drugs was therefore no less important than that of terrorism and religious extremism.

Looking at the long-term outlook, S. Cornell said, «even if opium production in Afghanistan stops tomorrow and huge plantations dry up, the flow of heroin to Europe will stop only for a short time. Prices will rise, stimulating production in other States, mainly in Central Asia, where well-established networks already exist for the cultivation, production and transport of drugs»⁴⁴.

It follows that the drug menace will not be completely exhausted, nor will the threat of terrorism. Accordingly, in view of these realities, mechanisms to counter the drug threat must be adapted to the current situation. Also, the countries of Central Asia lack the resources to eradicate drug crops and opium fields in Afghanistan, so it is clear that the threat will persist in the drug-supplying state. If the drug problem in Afghanistan is completely solved, then we can say that Central Asia is not a drug threat. The countries of Central Asia must now work together to minimize the threat. The greatest mistake in combating threats of all kinds is the fragmentation of countries' positions. All countries have an interest in the fight against guns, but their positions may differ for political reasons. In order to combat the scourge of drugs from Afghanistan, it is necessary to coordinate the actions of all member countries and to establish a comprehensive mechanism through which the fight against drugs will be carried out.

Now, after the withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan, the first priority is to ensure security. In this context, the attention of the international community to the fight against drugs has been relegated to the last positions. Following the capture of Kabul by the Taliban on August 15, Taliban officials at a press conference on August 18 pledged not to trade in heroin. A ban on the cultivation of opium poppy could lead to increased poverty among opium farmers. In this case, they will lose money to support their families. Therefore, the Taliban should be extremely careful; their action can hit the budget of farmers, causing a surge of discontent among the peasants.

In the foreseeable future, significant changes will not occur, most likely, drug production will not disappear overnight, but will remain at this rate. After the end of the American campaign in Afghanistan, the drug situation was completely transferred to the hands of the Taliban, the attention of

⁴⁴ Trafik afganskih opiatov cherez territoriyu Kyrgyzstana (2014), otchyot, Nacional'nyj institut strategicheskikh issledovanij Kyrgyzskoj Respubliki, Bishkek. Accessed on 10.11.2021 at: https://ecuo.org/mvdev/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2016/09/narcotraf_report_14.pdf

the world community is riveted on security issues. Therefore, now all strategies and programs aimed at combating drugs are frozen.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the steady growth of drugs and their transit, cooperation between CSTO, SCO and UNODC in the fight against drugs should be strengthened. Their interaction can be expressed in the following step:

1. Step-by-step signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation, which will clearly define the responsibilities of each of their entities in the fight against drugs. Based on their experience in a given area, each entity will be responsible for its own activities. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization should be entrusted with the task of inspecting sites that promote the production of drugs. CSTO should take control of the conduct of anti-drug exercises. SCP should take responsibility for establishing mobile teams, training authorized persons, organizing courses and educating the public through training to reduce drug demand.
2. Counter-narcotics exercises should be conducted monthly, involving both SCO member countries and CSTO. Unlike the CSTO, the SCO includes both India and Pakistan, which are also bordered by Afghanistan. Uzbekistan is also a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which has suspended its membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization, and therefore its involvement is essential in the fight against drugs, given its geographical location.
3. An organ such as the Regional Counter-Narcotics Committee should be created within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.
4. The current situation makes it necessary to create an «anti-drug security belt» in Central Asia.
5. Turkmenistan should be involved in the elaboration of a common position to combat the drug threat.

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