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INTERPOL FIGHT AGAINST ILLEGAL DRUG TRAFFICKING

Drug trafficking is a global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws. UNODC is continuously monitoring and researching global illicit drug markets in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their dynamics. Drug trafficking is a key part of this research [1].

Drug trafficking and drug abuse are among the major social issues that the world has to grapple with. The far-reaching consequences of drug abuse in humanitarian, social and economic terms have led to intensive action on the part of Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO/ INTERPOL) plays a key role as the central command for the joint efforts of the national law enforcement agencies of its 195 member States. This text outlines the role of INTERPOL, particularly its Drugs Sub-Division, in international drug control efforts. It includes a discussion of INTERPOL policies and practices related to drug control and of recent developments in its information and communication capabilities [2].

As far as international police cooperation aimed at combating drug production and trafficking and related crimes is considered, INTERPOL is dedicated to assisting its member countries in two main ways:

1) On a daily, case-by-case basis, INTERPOL provides significant assistance to its member countries by facilitating cooperation and the development of transnational investigations. INTERPOL's Command and Coordination Centre (CCC) provides member countries with immediate assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week in all four official INTERPOL languages (English, French, Spanish and Arabic). The CCC can contact INTERPOL's specialized Criminal Organizations and Drugs Sub-Directorate for urgent cases and follow up;

2) In response to a specific criminal phenomenon or issue, INTERPOL can quickly establish a trend analysis, dedicated project or operation, based on a request from any member country communicated via its NCB.

Projects or operations undertaken in the field of combating illicit drug trafficking are managed by the "Criminal Organizations and Drugs

Sub-Directorate”, whose work consists of the following main actions and initiatives:

- Assessing the issue at hand with the assistance of expert police guidance, and setting up common strategies;
- Creating a network of contact officers specialized in drug investigations;
- Gathering, collecting and exchanging relevant operational information, including information pertaining to real and/or active cases;
- When requested, creating a central repository of information for the benefit of investigators;
- Establishing dedicated working groups and arranging periodic meetings;
- Sharing analytical products of common interest;
- Deploying Incident Response Teams (IRTs) upon the request of a member country to provide on-the-ground assistance, especially with regards to the international aspects of an investigation;
- Issuing drug alerts or INTERPOL.

Presently, INTERPOL’s Criminal Organizations and Drugs Sub-Directorate, in cooperation with its member countries, other international partners and regional law enforcement organizations, is coordinating or partnering in several drug-related projects and operations [3].

The overall aims of the Drugs Sub-Division are to enhance cooperation among national drug law enforcement services and stimulate the exchange of information among all national and information among all nation with countering the illicit production, traffic and use of drugs, and to strengthen the ability of national services to combat the illicit traffic.

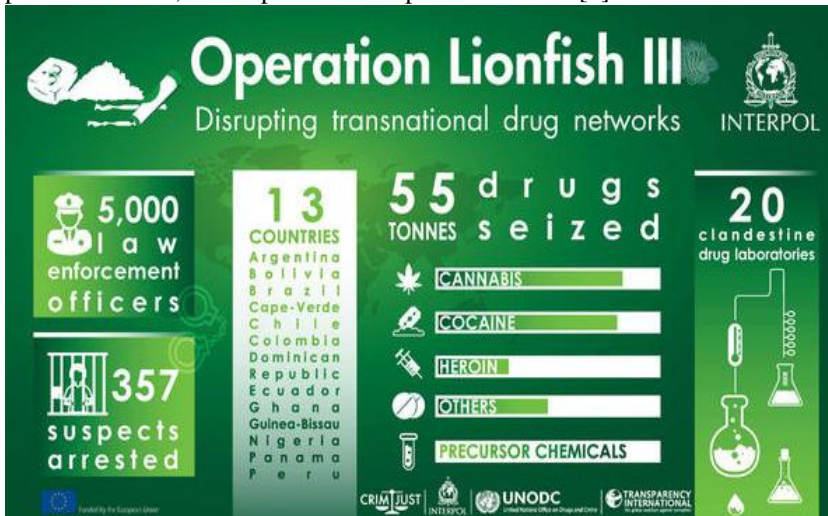
To accomplish these aims, the Drugs Sub-Division maintains a data bank containing all relevant drug-related information with an index of identified traffickers, coordinates international requests for information and investigations, and compiles and disseminates both tactical and strategic intelligence.

The Drugs Sub- Division comprises two groups: the Operations Group and the Intelligence Group.

The Operations Group is staffed by 10 Liaison Officers, each of whom are responsible for liaison with police authorities in a specific geographical area or zone. These Liaison Officers conduct regular visits to national drugs services in their assigned areas, and prepare situation reports, and assessments concerning the extent of the trafficking. On the basis of those reports and assessments specific activities are proposed for each region.

The daily duties of the Liaison Officers consist of receiving and analyzing messages from national Central Bureaus in their geographical areas and zones. These messages, handled by the Interpol radio network, report on drugs seizures or request assistance in on-going investigations.

The Intelligence Group has the task assessing the worldwide drug trafficking situation, and collates incoming investigation data with a view to developing strategic intelligence. Since the development of computer services the Intelligence Group has been able to process the data in different ways, to examine the quantities and types of drugs transported from one place to another, and to perform in depth area studies [4].



Source: United Nations. Operation Lionfish III led by INTERPOL

Summing up, criminal networks traffic a range of drugs including cannabis, cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine. As international borders become increasingly porous, global abuse and accessibility to drugs have become increasingly widespread.

This international trade involves growers, producers, couriers, suppliers and dealers. It affects almost all of our member countries, undermining political and economic stability, ruining the lives of individuals and damaging communities. The end-users and addicts are often the victims of a powerful and manipulative business.

Drug trafficking is often associated with other forms of crime, such as money laundering or corruption. Trafficking routes can also be used by criminal networks to transport other illicit products.

As criminals devise ever-more creative ways of disguising illegal drugs for transport, law enforcement faces challenges in detecting such concealed substances. In addition, new synthetic drugs are produced with regularity, so police need to always be aware of new trends and products on the illicit market [5].

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PREVENT DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The problem of domestic and sexual violence is relevant for many countries. However, it is particularly acute in developing countries. The difficult economic situation combined with the shortcomings of the administrative and legal system leads to the spread of sexual and domestic violence. Therefore, the work of the Anglo-American legal system in the field of preventing and overcoming the manifestations of domestic violence is interesting and requires detailed analysis. Today, the United States and Canada are countries with developed systems for combating domestic violence, which contain not only administrative and legal mechanisms but also include a number of educational and correctional components. An important element of the mechanisms for responding to and preventing