

WORKING P A P E R S

**Drug Trafficking
on the Great Silk
Road: The Security
Environment in
Central Asia**

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INTRODUCTION

To address drug proliferation and trafficking in the context of non-traditional security threats and to try to find ways out of the potentially explosive situation, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace sponsored a meeting of representatives of the five Central Asian states, Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, the United States, the United Nations Drug Control Program (UNDCP), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Aga Khan Development Network, held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan in May 1999. This paper analyzes the situation in the region based on the conference proceedings and aims to raise international awareness of the seriousness of the problem. It also advocates the need for a concerted effort within the region and without to help these countries fight this evil.

Central Asia has recently emerged as a major international drug trafficking center. According to United Nations drug control experts, 80 percent of heroin consumed in Western Europe originates in Afghanistan and Pakistan.¹ One half of these drugs (about 120 tons of heroin equivalent per year according to some estimates) travels to Europe via Central Asia, a dangerous cargo to pass along the revived ancient Great Silk Road.

Such drug trade is imperiling the health of these newly independent states in a number of different ways. Drugs undermine weak states, and the developing situation in Central Asia is following true to course. Deteriorating economic conditions throughout much of the region are tailor-made to the needs of the drug industry. Economic necessity makes police and border guards more receptive to bribes and ordinary citizens more willing to take the risks associated with the transport or cultivation of drugs.

The presence of drugs brings with it organized crime. These criminal groups are sometimes able to find potential partners among some of the region's opposition forces. This is especially true of anti-system groups that have little or no chance of gaining political access to political power under the current circumstances. The most extreme Islamic radical groups are thus attracted to alliances with the drug trade, as are those that seek guns and other weapons.

The increased presence of drugs in Central Asia has also created an expanded drug problem among the Central Asian population; this problem is fed in part by the fact that for the first time heroin is being refined in significant quantities in the region. The growing drug problem puts a further burden on government budgets, increases crime rates and diminishes public safety, raises levels of domestic violence, child abuse, and costs of health care, stimulates the rapid spread of several deadly infectious diseases, and further decreases economic productivity.

The Central Asian states lack the funds and technical expertise to wage a successful war against drugs. Most of the governments in the region also lack the will power to do so. There is a dangerous cycle developing. Weak regimes are reluctant to take the political risks associated with tangling with a dangerous opponent, but the organized drug trade is rapidly becoming a more powerful presence in the area, and the political risks of engaging with them will only increase over time.

International assistance could help address the funding and technical problems associated with combating Central Asia's drug problem, but the United States in particular still lacks sufficient incentive to do so. Fighting drugs is a major U.S. concern. The annual federal drug budget for law enforcement has grown from roughly \$53 million in 1970 to more than \$8.2 billion in 1995.² In the past decade, U.S. (federal) spending on international drug control, including interdiction efforts,

reached nearly \$20 billion.³ However, very little of this money is targeted to Central Asia, whose drug trade and industry is not considered to be a direct threat to the United States. European states are more directly engaged, largely through the auspices of the United Nations and Interpol. To date, their efforts have been underfunded and marked by the frustrations produced by engaging with governments that are unable or unwilling to take comprehensive measures to address the problem.

The drug problem is still a relatively new one for the Central Asian region. Until the last years of communist rule, drug use in the Soviet Union was nowhere near as wide-spread as it was in the West. In fact, official propaganda portrayed addiction to drugs as a “capitalist disease” that could not spread to the socialist world.⁴ All data concerning drug trade and the number of drug addicts was classified and considered to be a state secret, making it almost impossible to estimate the number of drug addicts in the USSR. The beginning of the war in Afghanistan, however, changed the *status quo*, since many of the Soviet soldiers who fought in Afghanistan got addicted to opiates. They also established business relations with the Afghan drug producers, some of whom continue to serve as a source of the present expanded drug trade.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union the map of the world has been changed forever. New states have emerged, borders have opened, and new relations have been established. Unfortunately, this has also meant more opportunities for drug trafficking and proliferation. This is especially true because the newly independent states of Central Asia cannot easily cut themselves off from the situation in Afghanistan.

The proliferation of drugs is undermining Central Asian society. It is a blight on the economic and social environment and a threat to the traditional system of values. Drug addiction damages the physical, psychological, and emotional health of whole pockets of society, wreaking particular havoc on the younger generation.

Central Asian society is at risk from drugs in a number of different ways. The flourishing drug trade in the region enables separatist, radical religious, and terrorist movements that have already sprung up in Central Asia to become financially self-sufficient.

A DRUG-DOMINATED REGION

Geography and history make Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan attractive areas for drug traffic. These states are situated between the world’s largest illicit opium producers and the most lucrative markets in Western Europe. The countries border or are located in close proximity to the countries of the Golden Crescent (Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran) and, via China, have access to the countries of the Golden Triangle (Burma, Laos, and Thailand), which are the world’s largest producers of illicit opiates. Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan border Afghanistan (1,206 km, 744 km, and 137 km long borders, respectively), by far the region’s and the world’s largest opiate producer.⁵ Turkmenistan also has a 992 km border with Iran, and its loosely protected borders enable it to serve as a conduit of drugs between Afghanistan and Iran (which closely monitors its own Afghan border). In addition, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan border China (1,533 km, 858 km, and 414 km long borders, respectively). China offers a market for the selling of drugs and also serves as a supplier of ephedrine, which is legal in China but illegal in most of the world.⁶ These countries serve as a conduit, as well, for the output of heroin laboratories in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan.⁷

The amount of drugs produced just beyond Central Asia’s borders poses an almost unmanageable challenge to these new and weak states (see Tables 1 and 2). According to a United Nations Drug Control Program (UNDCP) report for 1997, Burma and Afghanistan were the world’s largest producers of illicit opiates and together accounted for 80 percent of the territory and

90 percent of the quantity of illicit opium production.⁸ Opium poppy cultivation in southwest Asia increased in 1999 as a result of greater cultivation in Afghanistan, which has now surpassed Burma as the world's leading producer of the drug. The 1999 Afghan crop was 4,581 metric tons (see Table 3).⁹ At the UNDCP-approved conversion rate of 10:1, this also implies a production of about 460 tons of heroin. As the illicit demand for heroin in the United Kingdom or Italy is about eight tons per year,¹⁰ one can get some sense of just how vast a demand this amount of heroin can meet.

Initially there had been some hope that the apparent victory of the Taliban movement would lead to more effective restrictions on Afghan drug producers. The movement leaders had earlier made a point of stressing that they would pursue a policy of drug controls. The consumption of "intoxicants" is contrary to Islam, so they argued that cultivation of opium, manufacturing of heroin and morphine, and drug trafficking violate Sharia law. In 1999 the Taliban controlled 97 percent of the territory that produced illicit opium, but the promised controls have not been forthcoming, despite numerous public announcements and a reported burning of a ton of opiates in June 1998 in Jalalabad.

In part the situation is complicated by the fact that though the Taliban controls over 80 percent of the country's total territory, it is not recognized internationally as a legitimate political force. This limits its ability to attract either international assistance or foreign investment. For example, after several years of efforts, in 1998 UNOCAL withdrew from its oil and gas development project in Turkmenistan because the lack of a recognized government in Afghanistan made the construction of a pipeline across that territory almost impossible.

The problem is a circular one. The political void in Afghanistan enables the drug trade to become more deeply entrenched, which in turn helps deepen the political void. Currently, no direct U.S. financial assistance can go to this poor southwest Asian country, as Afghanistan has been denied certification by President Clinton because of its track record as a major producer, manufacturer, and trafficker of opiates. Therefore, opium has become the principal cash crop and the main source of revenue for Afghanistan.

Table 1. Global cultivation estimates of opium poppy (in hectares)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Cultivation in:						
South-West Asia	65,629	77,229	58,850	57,697	59,290	64,562
South-East Asia	197,106	168,664	175,768	186,712	179,924	158,295
Other Asia	5,704	5,700	5,025	3,190	2,050	2,050
Total Asia	268,439	251,593	239,643	247,599	241,264	224,907
Latin America	8,968	20,886	10,276	10,016	10,584	12,966
Total Cultivation	277,407	272,479	249,919	257,615	251,848	237,873

Source: UNDP, *Global Illicit Drug Trends 1999*, p. 23.

Table 2. Global Production Estimates of Opium Poppy (in tons)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Production in:						
South-West Asia	2,491	3,544	2,447	2,272	2,828	2,136
South-East Asia	1,998	1,722	1,803	1,915	1,829	1,437
Other Asia	4	90	78	48	30	30
Total Asia	4,493	5,356	4,328	4,235	4,687	3,603
Latin America	117	265	124	121	136	162
Total Production	4,610	5,621	4,452	4,356	4,823	3,765

Source: UNDP, *Global Illicit Drug Trends 1999*, p. 23.

Table 3. Opium Production and Cultivation in Afghanistan, 1994–1999

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Production (in tons)	3,416	2,335	2,248	2,804	2,692	4,581
Cultivation (in hectares)	71,470	53,759	56,824	58,416	63,674	90,983

Source: UNDP, *Global Illicit Drug Trends 1999*, p. 23; and UNDCP, *Afghanistan: Annual Opium Poppy Survey*, November 1999, p. 9.

Part of the problem is that not enough funds are being earmarked for crop substitution programs for Afghan farmers. Since the denial of certification does not preclude U.S. assistance going to counter-narcotics efforts, the U.S. government provides funding for Mercy Corps International, an American NGO that sponsors a poppy eradication and alternative development program in Helmand province. The program received \$772,000 of funding in fiscal year 1997 and \$1.04 million in fiscal year 1999.¹¹ The program also focuses on rehabilitation of the Boghra canal and repair of underground irrigation channels. It is no longer clear, however, that the Taliban government would be willing to strongly support crop substitution efforts. It has been reported that the Taliban is not enforcing the policy and does not punish those farmers who have benefited from the crop substitution programs and still continue to grow opium poppy.¹²

It is also difficult to persuade farmers to switch from illicit to licit crops. Pakistan's experience with opium poppy shows that cultivation of licit crops is not really a competitive option, as farmers are able to get a much higher price for illicit drugs. For example, in 1992 a farmer in Pakistan who grew onions instead of opium poppy was able to get only about 75 percent of the monetary equivalent that he would have been able to get for the drug, and all other substitute crops produced even less income.¹³ However, despite these drawbacks some progress has been made in Pakistan, where as a result of crop substitution policies no poppy was harvested in 1999 in the Dir district.¹⁴

Afghanistan is a different story. The UNDCP has estimated that its alternative development project in that country was not successful despite an expenditure of approximately \$8.5 million by mid-1995.¹⁵ The problem in Afghanistan is further exacerbated by the fact that opium poppy fields have displaced wheat fields, and this has greatly decreased the food supply in the country.

The Taliban not only turns a blind eye on the opium poppy fields, but taxes the drug as any normal good. Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani journalist who has long covered the region, maintains that the tax is a 20 percent levy and is largely used to finance the war. Similar taxes are imposed by the Northern Alliance on opium crossing over to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.¹⁶ The Taliban's leaders justify their actions with the argument that the drug is used primarily for export and harms adherents to other faiths. Indeed, this allegation seems to generally be the case, as according to the International Narcotics Control Strategy report of 1999, addiction to opiates among the Afghans is serious only in the northern province of Badakhshan, where drugs are concentrated before they enter Tajikistan.¹⁷

While some of the drugs are sent to India and Pakistan for local consumption, Europe is their main destination. Drugs travel several routes from Afghanistan to Western Europe—through Iran, Turkey, and the southern Balkans or via the Caucasus, Russia, and other western republics of the former Soviet Union. It has recently become more and more dangerous to transport drugs through Iran and Turkey. To deter drug trafficking, Iran built a system of channels, concrete dam constructions, sentry points, and observation towers, as well as a road alongside the entire eastern border. In addition, that country regularly deploys 30,000 law enforcement personnel to guard this border and has introduced the death penalty for possession of more than 30 grams of heroin or over 5 kilograms of opium. As a result of increased official vigilance, more than 80 percent of the global seizures of opium (raw and prepared) are made in Iran.¹⁸ Turkey has also been determined to curb drug trafficking through its territory, and there are reports that both the cooperation and professionalism of Turkish law enforcement officers are increasing.

In many ways the opposite situation is true in the north Caucasus, where there is a hospitable environment for drug dealers. The myriad of ethnic conflicts has created the unstable conditions upon which they seem to thrive. Borders can be made permeable if the price is right, and there are lots of potential arms buyers who are eager to find ways to finance their purchases. Many of the routes through these regions rely on transit through Central Asia. In addition, it is not entirely clear how conflicts in the republics of the former Yugoslavia and in Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, Chechnya, and Dagestan will play out, encouraging drug bosses to diversify and to look for new routes to deliver narcotics to Europe.

NARCOTICS PRODUCTION IN CENTRAL ASIA

The Central Asian states are no strangers to drug cultivation and consumption, something that has made people at the grassroots level more willing to be drawn into the financial incentives of the drug trade. For example, Kazakhs traditionally served koknar, a drink consisting of a mixture of alkaloids of the opium group (morphine, codeine, narcotine, heroin, and dionine), along with hydrocarbon,

protein, resin, oil, and pigments, during national and religious holidays or at funerals. Often guests would be sent home with small amounts of dry koknar, which was a sign of the wealth of the hosts. Koknar was also universally used as a remedy for the loss of appetite, pains in the joints, and prolonged coughs. Opium was traditionally smoked, brewed, or processed into a beverage for celebrations, medicine, or daily use by Turkmen tribal groups.¹⁹

Opium has long been cultivated in the region, and records of opium poppy cultivation in Kyrgyzstan go back to the 19th century. Opium production began to be used for medicinal purposes during the colonial period. At the end of the 19th century an opiates-producing pharmaceutical plant was opened in what is now Shymkent, Kazakhstan. In fact, the Kyrgyz continued to legally grow opium poppy until 1974. Some 98 state and collective farms in Kyrgyzstan's Issyk-Kul oblast produced 80 percent of the total licit opium in the Soviet Union and 16 percent of the world's supply.²⁰ Prior to WWII, the Soviet government used Indian seeds to cultivate cannabis that had a high concentration of the psychoactive tetrahydrocannabinol. The cannabis was used in production of industrial hemp fiber.

It is important to remember just how easy it is to conceal drug cultivation in the region. These countries have the right kind of terrain and climate for cultivating narcotics. Everybody admits that cannabis production is very widespread, although no one is willing to make its eradication a priority. Cannabis is an easy-to-produce and lucrative cash crop. In Kyrgyzstan's Osh, Jalalabad, and Chu oblasts, the season for cannabis is April 30 to May 30; in Issyk-Kul and Talass oblasts, from May 15 to June 15; and in Naryn oblast, from June 15 to July 5. Tajikistan also collects two to three crops a season.

Since virtually none of this cannabis makes it to the United States, the U.S. government has taken almost no interest in this situation. In his report submitted to the House Committee on Appropriations and International Relations and the Senate Committee on Appropriations and Foreign Relations in 1999, President Clinton noted that Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, the Philippines, and South Africa are important cannabis producers. However, the President has determined that as cannabis produced in these countries is either consumed locally or exported to countries other than the United States, this crop does not significantly concern the United States.²¹

Yet the atmosphere of tolerance toward cannabis production, which is pervasive in the region as well, is carried over in large part to the cultivation and trade of opiates. The UNDCP, though, is far more concerned with drug traffic than drug production, as the regional office for Central Asia maintains that opium cultivation is limited, although many informed observers in the region claim that international monitoring agencies have still not identified all the sources of illegal cultivation.²² International observers have traced the cultivation of opiates to the Penjikent Valley in Tajikistan; in Turkmenistan it is scattered along the border with Iran, in the Akhal region, and in the eastern parts of the Lebap and Mary regions. Illegal cultivation of opiates is increasing in both of these countries. Just in 1998, Kyrgyzstan's drug enforcement agents discovered 1,039 square meters of illegal opium poppy cultivation in the Issyk-Kul region alone and confiscated 246 kilograms of dry opium poppy that this land produced.²³ In Uzbekistan most poppies are cultivated in the Samarkand-Surkhandaria region on the border with Tajikistan. Kazakhstan has about 2,000 hectares of illicit opium poppy and is capable of producing about 30 tons of opium.²⁴

The amount of land given over to opium production is a fraction of that devoted to cannabis. According to the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, in 1998 the Chu Valley had 400,000 hectares of wild growing cannabis, with an estimated harvest of 500 metric tons. This valley has a potential production of as high as 6,000 metric tons per year. Cultivation of opium is

sometimes mixed in with this cannabis. The government of Kazakhstan estimates that 15,000 acres of land are covered with wildy growing opium poppy, cannabis, and ephedra. About one-third of the Kyrgyz population cultivates cannabis. For example, a child can collect in a day an equivalent of 80 grams of hashish that cost \$25. Certain villages can produce up to 100 kilograms in a season.

In the current environment no serious effort is being made to substitute opium production for cannabis, even if the land would easily support the former. While each of these states is encountering serious difficulties in consolidating its independence, with the exception of Tajikistan, none of them can really be considered a lawless society. The existing legal structure is fragile and permeable, but it does exist. This makes the current environment more suited to the illicit drug trade than to widespread opium production.

The cultivation of opiates and other narcotics is increasing. The end result is that in Kazakhstan, for example, there is now an almost even split between domestically grown and foreign-originating drugs that are confiscated by Kazakh law enforcement. Kazakhstan also produces acetic anhydride, a heroin precursor, which it exports to Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union.

DRUG TRADE ACROSS CENTRAL ASIA

In today's Central Asia, the transit of drugs is already a major problem that if unchecked seems certain to increase in severity. The Central Asian states inherited many of the preconditions for successful cross-border trade activities, both legal and illegal. All had been republics of the former Soviet Union, share a common Soviet identity, and speak a common language; most had numerous ties to people outside of their own republic, either through kin or by association. With the collapse of the USSR they inherited a well-established air and road communication system that links them to Russia and the West, as well as networks of personal relations with officials in a dozen different countries. The Soviet breakup also led to more open borders and freer foreign travel. Increased cross-border communications meant increased opportunity for drug smugglers to establish contacts with interested parties in the region. The cross-border cooperation, which was not totally new, had been a major factor in the beginning of the proliferation of drugs in the Soviet Union during the war in Afghanistan.

The region was already becoming increasingly connected to the rest of the world during the Gorbachev period; since independence these connections have increased exponentially. In 1996, Turkmenistan opened a new railway line that connects it to Iran, and in 1998, a new road that linked eastern Tajikistan with China was inaugurated. The number of direct flights between the region's main cities and the outside world has also increased.

Along with the newly independent countries came new borders that had to be patrolled and new border guards who had to be trained. These new borders remained virtually transparent until new national customs services were created in 1993–1994. This was one of the reasons that international drug traffickers took a strong interest in the region.

The war in Tajikistan was another factor. A large portion of drugs that flow through the region enters via Tajikistan, which even before the war was Central Asia's poorest country. The pattern of cross-border ethnic relations has served as yet another powerful facilitator of the drug trade. Tajikistan's ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks both have kin across the Afghan border, and these relationships have helped make the civil wars in one country the business of those living across the border. The sale of drugs is more than just an economic livelihood for individuals; it provides entire groups with the economic means to sustain themselves and to advance their political causes.

The Uzbeks and Tajiks of Afghanistan's Northern Alliance have been struggling to take power for nearly two decades now, and have been in an ever-worsening situation since the rise of the Taliban in 1994. The other side of the border was a center of Tajik resistance. Afghanistan provided an important outlet for Tajikistan's Islamic opposition and Pamiri population (from the mountainous Badakhshan region) especially from 1992 to 1998, between the outbreak of the civil war and the signing of national reconciliation accords. They took refuge in Afghanistan, and their time in the camps brought them into closer contact with the drug trade.

Organized drug groups prey on such situations and are interested in further destabilizing the situation to make drug trafficking easier and to scare off international observers and advisors. They find receptive audiences among some of Central Asia's opposition groupings. Despite the signing of peace accords, an atmosphere of lawlessness still pervades parts of Tajikistan, especially in the Pamir region and near the Afghan border. While the situation does not yet resemble that of the north Caucasus, criminal groups have taken international observers hostage in Tajikistan, and in July 1998 four UN officials and observers were assassinated when heading from Tavildara region to Labidzhar, 170 kilometers east of Dushanbe.

Just like in the neighboring Afghanistan, it appears that the warring factions in Tajikistan have turned to drug trafficking to raise money to finance their military campaigns. As the drug trade becomes more entrenched in the region, the Islamic opposition also seems to be spreading and becoming bolder. Uzbek opposition groups that were pushed out of Tajikistan as part of the reconciliation process, most prominently those led by Djuma Namangani, have now taken refuge in Kyrgyzstan, pulling the southern and mountainous part of that country into the whirlwind of drug-related and other criminal activity.²⁵ From their perch in Kyrgyzstan, these groups are now at least partially isolated in a newly created oblast of Batken, from which they can threaten to descend on Uzbekistan. According to Bolot Zhanuzakov, Secretary of the Security Council of Kyrgyzstan, Djuma Namangani controls about 70 percent of drugs moving via the "northern route."²⁶ The existence of these groups on Kyrgyz territory prompted the decision of the Kyrgyz government in October 1999 to split Osh oblast into two parts (Osh and Batken).

While in the past year or two, public attention to the deteriorating situation in Central Asia has begun to increase, it took a while for the international community to become sensitized to the risks associated with this situation. The conditions of the breakup of the Soviet Union created a natural camouflage that worked to the drug dealers' advantage. The region was an untapped market and an enormous attraction for traders from throughout the world. In the early 1990s, goods coming to Europe from the former Soviet Union were not looked upon as suspicious and were not subjected to rigorous inspections at their European destinations, while those coming from southwest Asia were usually suspected of narcotics contraband and were thoroughly checked.

The fact that all of the countries of the region are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was an added benefit. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan are members of the CIS Customs Union, and Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are members of the Central Asian Economic Community. Kyrgyzstan is also a member of the World Trade Organization. Though most of these organizations are largely just *de jure* creations, they still make drug trafficking easier by, for example, maintaining a visa-free travel regime for the citizens of the CIS countries,²⁷ as well as by having various bilateral agreements that facilitate free trade between countries. In Kazakhstan, for instance, over 50 percent of drug traffickers are citizens of the countries of the former Soviet Union, and in 1998, the country's authorities arrested 463 citizens of the CIS for drug trafficking. It has been reported that 65.3 percent of the region's drug traffickers

are citizens of Tajikistan, 10.8 percent are citizens of Russia, 9.2 percent are citizens of Kyrgyzstan, and 8.2 percent are citizens of Turkmenistan.²⁸

Such a combination of history and geography pre-determined a flood of drugs into the region, and between 1992 and 1996 opium transportation through the region increased 13.5 times.²⁹ It is a two-way traffic with opium, morphine, heroin, and cannabis going to Europe, and precursors and synthetic drugs flowing back.³⁰ From Tajikistan's Badakhshan region drugs go on to Osh and Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan, Andijan and Tashkent in Uzbekistan, and Almaty in Kazakhstan. From there they travel on to Russia and to the rest of Europe.

A number of well-established drug routes are being used. The substance enters Tajikistan primarily via Pyandzh region, where Afghan drug dealers sell it to their Tajik counterparts who in turn deliver it to Dushanbe and then send it on to Moscow.³¹ A large portion of drugs is transported via Kyrgyzstan. Initially drugs were entering Kyrgyzstan via the Osh-Khorog route and the surrounding territory that bordered the Murgab region of the Gorno-Badakhshan region. Later drug traffickers shifted to the Altyn-Mazar route, which begins at the Raushan plateau and goes through the canyons of the Transaalai mountain range until it reaches the Chon-Alai valley. In 1998 the new so-called Batken route became popular. It includes mountain passes used to cross from Jergatal and Garm regions of Tajikistan into Batken oblast and the Kamadjan district of Osh oblast. The latest route is towards Khujand (Leninabad), which encompasses all the highways and roads in Lailak region and the neighboring parts of Uzbekistan. UNDCP reports that there are seven known trafficking routes from Tajikistan to Uzbekistan and two known routes from Turkmenistan.³²

The geography of the region works to the advantage of drug traffickers. For example, the Kyrgyz border with Tajikistan is difficult to patrol since large parts of it are more than 13,000 feet above sea level and temperatures fall to -40 degrees Fahrenheit in winter. Only a few roads cut across the region, and until recently, they were all in bad repair. There is an irony to this inaccessibility. Anyone with a horse, any other pack animal, a helicopter, or a plane is effectively able to evade detection. This has made drug trafficking a pursuit of the well-connected (to military and security) as well as of the poor, while crippling those who take seriously enforcing the law.

As we have noted, for the past several years the Tajikistan's Badakhshan region has been controlled by opposition Islamic groups. This mountainous region encompasses about 40 percent of Tajikistan's territory and is ill suited to both agriculture and industry. Two mountain roads connect it to Dushanbe and Osh, but these roads are not operational between October and April. The region also has the lowest absolute population and the lowest population density in the country, with 3.2 people per square kilometer.³³ International drug traders could not find a more hospitable economic situation. This was always a poor area with almost no industrial production, and over the last ten years the economic system put in place by the Soviets, flawed though it was, has almost fully disintegrated. The region's population is at present largely unemployed and certainly is financially strapped. It is also disproportionately young, and families are large. Tajikistan had the USSR's highest population growth: 40 births per 1,000 citizens. According to the 1989 census, the average family size was 6.1, and an average Tajik woman gave birth to between seven and nine children. As a result, 45 percent of the population are under the age of 15.

Drug trafficking seemed like an answer to their problems, and many of the citizens started to buy drugs in Afghanistan and move them to Kyrgyzstan.³⁴ The region became home to many drug-trafficking groups, with Lesha Gorbaty's group being the most notorious.³⁵ The drug trade is so widespread in Tajikistan that matchboxes with hashish have reportedly replaced money as holiday gifts.

The amount of money that can be made by even the most lowly on the drug chain is very significant. This is especially true when one considers that the average salary in Kyrgyzstan in 1998 was only \$28 per month and the incomes of those living in the border areas are lower still.³⁶ This creates an ideal target population.

According to the Russian Ministry of Interior, a kilogram of opium costs \$50 in Faizabad (Afghanistan), \$200 in Khorog (Tajikistan), \$1,000-1,500 in Osh (Kyrgyzstan), \$5,000 in Almaty (Kazakhstan), and \$10,000 in Moscow (Russia).³⁷ At the Tajik border one kilogram of heroin costs \$7,000-10,000, but by the time it reaches Moscow the price shoots up to \$150,000. According to UNDCP estimate, by the time this heroin reaches New York or London, its price is over \$200,000 per kilogram. At such prices the street value of the 1999 crop can be as high as \$100 billion.³⁸ UNDCP estimates that unless they are able to seize at least 75 percent of trafficked drugs they will be unable to diminish the profitability of the drug trade.³⁹ Currently they estimate that they are seizing 5 to 10 percent of the illicit drugs.

These figures give some sense of the money made. Those at the bottom of the drug chain—the opium farmers, along with the drug runners in Tajikistan and Afghanistan—see only a tiny fraction of the money that drug production and sales generate. UNDCP estimates that in 1999 opium poppy prices in Afghanistan ranged from \$27 to \$72 per kilogram and the total value of the crop at farmgate prices at harvest time was approximately \$183 million.⁴⁰ Those running drugs within Central Asia are able to realize a bit more and easily generate enough income to buy off many of the local security people. This reduces the transaction costs by offering the traffickers protection. The big money, though, goes to a very small number of people, some inside the region and many outside it, and the shadowy figures who serve as Central Asian intermediaries with the international drug trade are alleged to be able to wield strong influence, at least at the provincial if not at the national level. UNDCP estimates that heroin traffickers get 90 percent of the “value-added” of heroin in the producer country, processors get 2 percent, farmers 6 percent, and opium traders 2 percent.⁴¹ However, half of the total value is added at the distribution stage in the consumer countries. For example, should heroin be trafficked to the United States, 57 percent of its value will be added there.⁴²

The amount of money being made off drugs helps create a substantial imbalance between the capacities of the drug-traders and those charged with eliminating their practices. As heroin production becomes more prevalent in the region—and the refining of opium is both a growing and a newfound “industry” in Central Asia—this imbalance will increase quite rapidly. In the early 1990s the drug industry employed 10 percent of the economically active population in Bolivia, 3 percent in Peru, and approximately one percent in both Colombia and Pakistan.⁴³ Central Asia seems to be “catching up,” and it has already been reported that several million are involved in the production, refining, sale, and trafficking of drugs with an annual turnover of \$14 billion.⁴⁴

The countries of the region do not have the means to cope with this problem. Customs and border posts have no modern equipment or even weapons. It has been reported that officials at many of the customs checkpoints in Tajikistan do not even have handcuffs at their disposal. At the Tajik-Kyrgyz border there is very little or no control. The Murgab part of the Tajik-Afghan border is largely open. The Khorog-Osh road is about 750 kilometers long and connects Tajikistan (Gorno Badakhshan) with the southern part of Kyrgyzstan (Sari-Tash and Osh), allowing easy access to Andijan (Uzbekistan). The route is also an important connection with China. Recently, more rigid control at the Sari-Tash post on the road forced drug smugglers to change routes and go from the Badakhshan region (in Kyrgyzstan) toward Dara-Ut-Kurgan of the Chon Alai region and further down to Kyzyl-Kiya, Uzgen, and Jalal-Abad (in Kyrgyzstan) and then to Uzbekistan.

When one route disappears, another quickly appears, as the market is driving the process. After the February 1999 explosions in Tashkent, Uzbekistan has strengthened its border with Tajikistan and increased border controls with other neighboring countries. Uzbekistan has traditionally been a strong influence in this part of Tajikistan, but with the border closing its role is ebbing. As it does, drugs are starting to concentrate on the Khujant (Leninabad) route that has recently emerged as a main hub.

But this does not mean that fewer drugs are transported from the Badakhshan and other regions of Tajikistan to the Osh region in Kyrgyzstan. On the contrary, drug trafficking, particularly of heroin, is on the rise.⁴⁵ The traffickers are particularly fond of the “green border” between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, so termed because of its transparency.

The transportation of drugs through the area is on the rise. This is supported by data from the Russian Ministry of Interior, which manages anti-drug operations in the territory of Russia. In 1994 the ministry confiscated 260 kilograms of opium that had transited across Central Asia; in 1995, it was 1,750 kilograms; in 1996, it was 2,000, and for 1997 and 1998 it claims a twentyfold increase to about 40,000 kilograms.⁴⁶ Over the past ten years Russia’s illicit drug trade has increased by a factor of 1,000.⁴⁷

For all the complaints of their lack of vigilance, the Central Asians have stepped up their pursuit of drug traders as well (see Table 4). In Tajikistan in 1998 there were 1,285 arrests of would-be smugglers, and 2,951 kilograms of drugs were confiscated (including 1,190 kilograms of opium, 1,050 kilograms of marijuana and hashish, and 271 kilograms of heroin). The change from 1997 levels (3,456 kilograms of opium, 966 kilograms of marijuana, and 60 kilograms of heroin) shows a shift away from opium and toward heroin smuggling. In Turkmenistan during the first seven months of 1998, over 15 tons of various types of narcotics were confiscated, including 453 kilograms of heroin and 837.2 kilograms of opium. In 1998–1999, law enforcement agencies seized about seven tons of illicit narcotics in Uzbekistan.

In Kazakhstan more than 13 tons of various drugs were confiscated in 1998, while 20 tons of illicit drugs were apprehended in the first nine months of 1999. From January to November 1998, over 1.5 tons of drugs were confiscated in Kyrgyzstan, including 108 kilograms of opium (versus 398 in 1997) and 25 kilograms of heroin (versus 4 kilograms in 1997).⁴⁸

Most see the increase in the amount of drugs seized as a sign of how much more narcotics are transiting the area, rather than an indication of a successfully heightened security presence. Under a generally accepted assumption that seizures account for only 5 to 10 percent of the total volume, one can estimate that in 1997 at least 800 tons of drugs passed through Turkmenistan alone.

DRUG ADDICTION IN CENTRAL ASIA

The growth of the drug trade across Central Asia and the general increase in the amount of drugs available in the region have helped make drug addiction an increasingly more serious problem in the region as well. From the late 1970s on, with the advent of the war in Afghanistan, drug addiction became more widespread in the Soviet Union. Initially, Red Army veterans with Afghan service were the disproportionate source, but over time drug addiction became more closely intertwined with youth culture more generally. The Russian areas were more hard hit than those in Central Asia, but the number of drug addicts increased throughout the Soviet Union during these years.

Since independence, the number of drug users has steadily grown. Several factors contribute to this, including the breakdown of discipline and public order, the increasing presence of criminal

Table 4. Drug Seizure Statistics for Central Asia

Drug Seizures	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999 (9 months)
All drugs (in kilograms)							
Kazakhstan	12,000	11,000	10,400	12,975	31,521	13,368	20,330
Kyrgyzstan	1,733	1,747	1,255	2,118	2,428	1,774	1,145
Tajikistan	113	321	1,750	3,565	4,533	2,951	1,510
Turkmenistan	n/a	n/a	n/a	14,109	41,216	24,157	12,474
Uzbekistan	6,165	3,504	3,017	7822	3,308	3,206	2,500
including: Opium Poppy							
Kazakhstan	n/a	n/a	n/a	501	1,007	297	300
Kyrgyzstan	154	500	621	1,490	1,639	180	87
Tajikistan	38	244	1,571	3,405	3,456	1,190	577
Turkmenistan	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,750	1,410	1,412	2,016
Uzbekistan	256	280	834	1,866	2,400	1,935	2,000
Heroin							
Kazakhstan	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	43	24	30
Kyrgyzstan	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	4	25	16
Tajikistan	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	60	271	389
Turkmenistan	n/a	n/a	n/a	89.2	1,949	495	101
Uzbekistan	n/a	6	10	18	70	195	150
Cannabis							
Kazakhstan	n/a	n/a	n/a	8,342	n/a	11,576	20,000
Kyrgyzstan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,042
Tajikistan	14	12	91	88	966	1,050	553
Turkmenistan	n/a	n/a	n/a	12,270	37,857	22,249	10,357
Uzbekistan	2,643	1,449	1,237	5,544	720	1,021	350

Source: Data provided courtesy of the UNDCP regional office in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

groups active in society, easier access to drugs, and most recently, a drop in the price of heroin. The price drop is a deliberate action by drug dealers interested in stimulating more widespread addiction.

They are being successful in this regard, as drug addiction is increasing and becoming especially prevalent among youth. Kazakhstan is estimated to have 200,000 drug users, two-thirds of whom are under the age of 30, giving the country a ratio of 12.3 addicts per thousand in 1998, which is the highest in the region. In Turkmenistan, official statistics estimate the number of local addicts as 50,000, with a ratio of 10.0 per thousand. Uzbekistan has 200,000 addicts, or 8.2 addicts per 1,000. There are no good statistics on the problem for Tajikistan, for the Tajikistan National Agency for Narcotics Control was established only in April 1999. Kyrgyzstan has approximately 50,000 drug users, with a ratio of 11 per thousand; however, only 6,000 are officially registered. Some 75 percent

of the addicts are between 14 and 30 years of age. The increase in addiction is a sharp one, up from only 3.9 per thousand in 1991.⁴⁹

By international standards, the region's current addiction rates are comparable to those of the United States but are higher than those in Western Europe. In 1994, the United States had 2,738,000 dependent users (10.5 per 1,000); Sweden had 17,000 heavy users (1.9 per 1,000); and Italy had between 170,000 and 416,000 addicts (between 3.0 and 7.3 per 1,000), while Colombia had 1,270,000 addicts (21.5 per 1,000) and Pakistan had three million dependent users (23.4 per 1,000).⁵⁰

It is also hard to know how much confidence to place in any of these official estimates, as in some places anecdotal evidence suggests that the problem may be much larger. There are now whole communities blighted by the drug culture. For example, the city of Temirtau in the Karaganda oblast of Kazakhstan used to be one of the largest steel producers in the former USSR. With the breakup of the Soviet Union and the subsequent reduction of steel output, the increasing rise in unemployment left this one-plant town in dire straits. As a result young people turned to drugs. It has been estimated by the UNDCP that at least 3,000 of the 32,000 youth aged between 15 and 29 inject drugs, creating an HIV epidemic that is raging in the area, with about 700 infected with the AIDS virus in the Karaganda oblast alone.⁵¹

The countries in the region are still ill-equipped to deal with the myriad of problems that drug addicts pose. According to a United Nations report, the economic cost of drug abuse in the United States, including emergency room visits, higher incidence of HIV/AIDS, increased criminal activity, and productivity loss, was estimated at \$110 billion in 1999. This is an increase from \$44 billion in 1985 and \$76 billion in 1991. The economic costs of drug abuse in the United States were, on average, approximately \$6,700 per year per drug abuser and \$28,100 per year per heavy drug abuser.⁵² It is clear that the Central Asian states will not be able to cope with such expenses.

Central Asia's medical system is already under enormous stress, and it is unable to deal with threats to public health such as increased incidence of AIDS, hepatitis, and tuberculosis (TB). In 1991–1996, incidences of tuberculosis increased by 28 percent in Kazakhstan and by 55 percent in Kyrgyzstan. The trend continues, and from January to July 1999 the incidence of TB per 100,000 people in Kazakhstan rose from 66.7 to 81.8, or by 22.6 percent.⁵³ The World Health Organization lists Kazakhstan among the 12 nations with the highest tuberculosis rate. The country also has the highest incidence of hepatitis in the CIS and has witnessed several serious outbreaks of the disease. HIV infection was first reported in the region in 1987, in Kyrgyzstan, and by 1997 all countries reported incidences of infection. By the end of 1998, Kazakhstan reported 815 cases of HIV (including 27 foreigners), Kyrgyzstan 26 (including 20 foreigners), Tajikistan three, Turkmenistan one, and Uzbekistan 48 (including 27 foreigners). In addition, Kazakhstan reported 24 cases of AIDS (17 people have died) and Uzbekistan reported seven deaths from AIDS.⁵⁴ The situation continues to deteriorate, and in 1999 the Central Asian/Eastern European Region had the greatest percentage increase in HIV infections in the world.⁵⁵ On World AIDS day, December 1, 1999, the UNDCP and UNAIDS announced the launching of new prevention projects in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

There is also a real shortage of facilities to treat drug addicts themselves. There are a few “state of the art” facilities, such as the Nazaraliev Medical Center in Bishkek which was created in 1991 and has its own specific methodology that it is marketing. The center treats addicts from the region as well as from parts of Russia, but it in no way meets the local demand. In addition, treatment at the Center is beyond the means of the majority of the region's population. A month-long stay is about \$1,700 for citizens of Kyrgyzstan, \$3,500 for citizens of other Central Asia countries, and \$5,000 for Russians.⁵⁶ Since 1991 the number of hospital beds for the country's drug patients

decreased by over 70 percent and as of 1999 there were 0.7 such hospital beds per 10,000 population.⁵⁷ Many countries of the region continue to treat drug addicts as second-rate citizens who are mentally ill. In fact, in 1998 Turkmen officials put treatment clinics under the auspices of psychiatric hospitals.

CRIME

Drugs are contributing to the criminalization of the area. According to UNDCP estimates, from 1991 to 1993, detected opium cultivation and drug-related crime increased by 300 and 65 percent, respectively.⁵⁸ In 1994, Kazakhstan reported 564 drug crimes per million population and Kyrgyzstan 553, whereas the comparable number for Austria was 1,495, for Canada 2,075, for France 934.⁵⁹ In 1996, every fourteenth crime committed in Kyrgyzstan was drug-related.⁶⁰ However, in 1998, Kyrgyzstan and especially Kazakhstan were “catching up” with the West. Kyrgyzstan registered 3,295 drug-related crimes and Kazakhstan 18,479 drug-related crimes (or 702 and 1,193 crimes per million population, respectively). The incidence of drug-related crimes appeared to be increasing in 1999, as in only the first three months of 1999, 5,247 drug-related crimes were reported in Kazakhstan. In 1997 Russia had 185,000 drug-related crimes (or about 1,261 crimes per million population), which is a 90 percent increase from 1996.⁶¹

Drugs lead to an increase in white collar crime, especially in the amount of money laundering that goes on in the region, particularly in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan which have the region’s most developed banking systems. Certain steps to curb money laundering, however, have been made. The Kyrgyz seem to be the most concerned. The Central Bank of Kyrgyzstan has instituted provisions for banks to require customer identification and to report suspicious transactions, but bank oversight is minimal. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have criminalized drug money laundering and money laundering in general, and now maintain banking records over periods of time. None of the countries, though, records large transactions or reports suspicious transactions. In Uzbekistan, money-laundering legislation and extradition and mutual legal assistance treaties are non-existent, and legislation governing the seizure of assets is vague. Banking and financial systems in Tajikistan are underdeveloped, so it is not a significant source of money laundering.

Drugs also contribute to the general atmosphere of criminalization of the economy. The movement of contraband is common throughout the region, especially in both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Kazakh authorities estimate that \$10 billion in illegal raw material exports have occurred through illegal joint ventures.⁶² The Kyrgyz minister of interior has stated that the majority of the tobacco, alcohol, and gasoline imported into Kyrgyzstan is brought in illegally. Turkmen officials are concerned that crime groups may be laundering funds through casinos or hotels.

Drugs have also contributed to an increasing problem of corruption among the police and other security forces. Secondary circulation of seized drugs is not uncommon in all of the countries of the region. The rampant level of corruption is not entirely surprising. A police officer or customs official is likely to make only \$20-30 a month, which makes him very susceptible to bribes. In Kyrgyzstan, in accordance with a presidential decree of December 1998, a special coordination council was established to find and prosecute corrupt officials. As of May 1999 there had still been no major prosecutions. In Tajikistan, interior personnel detained on corruption charges in late 1998 were released soon afterward, following threats from high-profile interested parties.

In the last few years there have been a number of arrests of high-level security officials and other kinds of police officials in Kyrgyzstan, including the head of a drug-fighting unit in Osh and some of the unit’s members.⁶³ This crackdown is said to be only scratching the surface of the problem since, according to reports, at least 50 percent of the country’s customs officials collaborate with drug

traffickers.⁶⁴ Most serious are the allegations made against those serving in Russia's 201st Motorized Division, stationed in Tajikistan. The Russian soldiers (which include large numbers of ethnic Tajiks) are often accused of facilitating the drug trade, in part by giving over access to military aircraft and other equipment. There are even accounts of Tajik drug dealers using these Russian planes to send drugs to military airports outside of Moscow. In December 1997 twelve enlisted military personnel were detained at the Chkalovsk airport for trying to smuggle in more than eight kilograms of drugs, including three kilograms of heroin.⁶⁵ Observers in the region, though, say that the use of the military and military equipment to move narcotics is a frequent occurrence.

The profile of a typical drug trafficker has also changed, further exacerbating the work of law enforcement groups. Most of those now involved in the operation have no prior convictions. Women are playing a more important role in the business. Since 1996 their share has increased from 3 percent to 12.2 percent in Kazakhstan; women constituted 35 percent of those convicted of drug crimes in 1998 in Tajikistan and 12.4 percent in Kyrgyzstan. Women usually accept less pay for their courier services. In case of arrest they are less likely to give up their suppliers because of a stronger desire to protect their families, and they are more likely to get shorter sentences due to the courts' general leniency toward women, particularly toward those with children. There is also a reverse side to this problem, as governments can charge political opponents with drug possession with intent of sale and, with this one action, both eliminate their opposition and discredit them internationally.

The ongoing process of globalization only exacerbates many of the problems associated with the drug trade. Improved communication has increased human mobility and has spread the pattern of drugs to other regions. Also, diffusion of technical expertise facilitates production of drugs in remote places. Growing integration of the financial system has made money laundering easier. There is a tendency for drug dealers and traffickers in various countries to unite to create transnational crime organizations and divide up the territory.⁶⁶ One group is responsible for transporting drugs from Tajikistan, and another group is in charge of the distribution. The number of criminal groups involved in drug trafficking is on the rise. In 1998 Kyrgyzstan had 64 drug-trafficking crime groups. During the first three months of 1999 law enforcement agents had already discovered 35 similar groups.⁶⁷ The Kazakh Security Committee identified 125 organized crime groups operating in Central Asia, 30 of which were involved in drug trafficking in Kazakhstan alone.⁶⁸ They are also becoming more sophisticated. If earlier truck drivers served as the main carriers of large quantities of drugs, now unmarked planes or helicopters move large loads. Customs officials are bribed or blackmailed with impunity. As a result, in many places there are no obstacles in the way of this dangerous cargo, and traffickers are continuously informed about law enforcement operations.

NATIONAL RESPONSES TO THE THREAT

At a rhetorical level at least, the leaders of these countries are willing to admit that they have an enormous problem on their hands, and all promise extraordinary efforts to deal with it. President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan has designated counter-narcotics programs as a national policy priority.

President Rahmonov of Tajikistan has declared 1999 as a year of fight against terrorism, organized crime, drug business, and corruption. At the June 1999 summit of the Central Asian Economic Community, presidents of the member states noted the necessity to combat terrorism, religious and political extremism, and illegal circulation of drugs, weapons, and explosives. President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan has made any number of public speeches on this problem.

President Akaev of Kyrgyzstan is probably the region's leading crusader in the war against drugs. In September 1998 he presented his views at the Central Asian heads of state meeting in Baku, where he introduced his concept of the revival of the Great Silk Road and cooperation among the regional states. In March 1999, Kyrgyzstan was elected to the UN Commission on Drug Control. In the spirit of the UN Political Declaration of 1998, which presupposes the reduction by 2008 of the world supply and demand of narcotics, President Akaev used the occasion of an international conference held in Bishkek in May 1999 to propose that all countries of the Great Silk Road create drug-free zones by the beginning of the third millennium. He stressed that close cooperation was needed not only at the regional but also at the international level in order to combat the threat posed by drugs. All these countries are parties to the 1988 United Nations Convention. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan are also parties to the UN conventions of 1961 and 1971. Tajikistan is also party to the World Customs Organization's International Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance for Prevention, Investigation, and Repression of Customs Offenses (the Nairobi convention, annex X on Narcotics Cases). In 1996 the five Central Asian states signed a memorandum of understanding between them and the UNDCP, and in January 1998 they were joined as signatories by Russia and the Aga Khan Development Network. In 1994 Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan formed the Central Asian Economic Commission and pledged to cooperate in the battle against illegal drugs. (Tajikistan joined in 1998.) In 1997 Kyrgyzstan initiated the creation of an interstate commission on control of drug proliferation which includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. However, as of May 1999 the functions and jurisdiction of this commission had yet to be negotiated.

Funding problems dodge all the efforts of the Central Asian governments. Since 1991 the states' GDPs have declined considerably—Kazakhstan's by 31 percent, Kyrgyzstan's by 34 percent, Tajikistan's by 49 percent, Uzbekistan's by 10 percent (see Table 5).⁶⁹ This has caused social programs to be cut back and made it hard to implement drug-related programs. The Kazakh government finalized a plan for drug control and crime prevention, but is unable to take action on it due to the lack of funding. The Uzbek government does not even want to approve the proposed master plan, knowing that there are no funds available for its implementation.

Somewhat more promising are the efforts of the countries of the region to work out more effective legislation to combat drug trafficking. Kazakhstan's revised criminal code includes severe punishments for narcotic trafficking and production, money laundering, and organized crime. Kazakhstan has also passed an anti-corruption law. The Kazakh government approved a UNDCP master plan for counter-narcotics and related crimes. In Kyrgyzstan the State Commission for Drug Control coordinates the efforts of over 15 ministries and agencies. There is a special governmental program of actions to control drugs for the years 1998 to 2000 that focuses on illegal drug trafficking and the reducing the demand for drugs. In April 1998 Kyrgyzstan was the first Central Asian state to pass a law on "drugs, illicit narcotics, and their precursors." The commission has also developed a concept for a national policy on drug control for the period from 1998 to 2000. Anti-drug measures are featured in a number of government programs, such as the "Healthy Nation," "Ayalzat," "Kyz Bala," "On the Measures to Strengthen the Civil Society and to Fight Against Crime in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan for 1997–2000," and "Araket" (a national program to overcome poverty). At the same time, it is fair to note that implementation of these policies has been difficult in part because the commission appears to lack sufficient competent personnel. In August 1999, the head of the commission, General Askarbek Mameev, was himself removed and replaced by Tulendi Mambetzhannov, who used to work in the presidential administration.⁷⁰ It is still too early to judge the effectiveness of the personnel shakeup.

Table 5. Main Socio-Economic Indicators for Central Asia

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Population (million, mid-year)						
Kazakhstan	17.0	16.0	15.9	15.7	15.5	
Kyrgyzstan	4.60	4.67	4.74	4.80	4.7	
Tajikistan	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.0	6.1	
Turkmenistan	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.7	
Uzbekistan	22.1	22.5	23.1	23.7	23.9	
GDP per capita at purchasing power parity (U.S. \$)						
Kazakhstan	2,529	2,500	2,578	2,707	2,697	
Kyrgyzstan	1,370	1,284	1,371	1,521	n/a	
Tajikistan	789	689	661	683	705	
Turkmenistan	1,750	1,511	1,391	1,021	1,021	
Uzbekistan	1,977	1,951	1,965	2,000	2,042	
Real GDP growth (%)						
Kazakhstan	-12.6	-8.2	0.5	1.7	-2.5	1.7
Kyrgyzstan	-20.1	-5.4	5.6	9.0	1.8	3.6
Tajikistan	-15.0	-12.4	-4.4	1.7	5.3	3.7
Turkmenistan*	-18.8	-8.2	-7.7	-25.9	5.0	16
Uzbekistan	-4.2	-0.9	1.6	2.4	2.0	4.4
Consumer price inflation (average; %)						
Kazakhstan	1,880	176	39.1	17.4	7.3	17.8
Kyrgyzstan	278	53	30.3	26.0	12.1	39.9
Tajikistan	350	630	418.1	87.8	43.4	30.2
Turkmenistan	1,748	1,005	992	84	18	24
Uzbekistan	1,568	305	54.0	58.8	17.8	22.8

Sources: EIU, Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, *CIS Statistical Yearbook 1998* (Moscow, 1999); RFE/RL, January 30, 1999, INTERFAX Investment Report of Central Asia and Caucasus for 7–13 February 2000, vol. 3, issue 6(63); Interfax Daily Business Report for January 28, 2000 and February 2, 2000.

*Turkmen GDP figures take into account economic activities that for various reasons are not registered by official agencies. These include the unofficial sector of the economy (income concealed from taxation), underground production, and illegal activities.

In Turkmenistan, the manufacture, possession, sale, or use of illicit narcotics is illegal under the criminal law passed in 1997. Though Turkmenistan introduced capital punishment for drug-dealing in 1993, the new code allowed the death penalty to be used if a suspect possessed two kilograms or more of heroin at the time of arrest. Turkmen officials enforced these regulations and in 1998 alone sentenced about 700 people to death by firing squad. Ninety percent of those sentenced were convicted on drug trafficking charges. However, even such a severe punishment did not impede the

trade, and the Turkmen-Afghan border remained one of the most transparent in the region. In 1997 more than 40 tons of drugs were seized in the country. In January 1999, in response to pressure from the world community and human rights organizations, President Karimov introduced a moratorium on the death penalty. In late December 1999, Halk Maslakaly (People's Council), the upper chamber of parliament, amended the constitution to reflect this change. It could be expected that drug trafficking through the country would only rise in the future.

In 1998 Uzbekistan amended its criminal code to reduce the quantity of confiscated narcotics necessary to trigger a criminal investigation and to lower the quantity that results in prosecution for possession with intent to distribute. In June 1998 the Uzbek Supreme Court sentenced two citizens of Kazakhstan to the death penalty for attempting to traffic 40 kilograms of heroin.⁷¹

The Central Asian states are all working on the eradication of opium poppy and cannabis fields. Each of the countries adopted its own version of the "Black Poppy" program. Under these auspices in 1998, 4,465 hectares of land were cleared of wild growing cannabis in Kazakhstan, along with over 4,000 hectares in Kyrgyzstan, 65 hectares in Tajikistan, and 2.9 hectares in Uzbekistan. In 1998, 107 incidents of illegal opium cultivation were registered in Kazakhstan's Issyk-Kul oblast alone, and 1,039 square kilometers of such plantations were eradicated.⁷²

In February 1996, the government of Kyrgyzstan passed decree no. 72, "On Specialized Brigades to Destroy Wild Growing Cannabis." The idea is to pay unemployed citizens to destroy the fields. It was planned that 930 unemployed would participate in this program. During 1999, however, the results of this program have not been encouraging, as it offers insufficient incentive to eliminate cannabis crops. For example, the 1998 budget for the program was \$375 total, and it employed 100 people.⁷³ Crop substitution is costly and requires a great deal of supervision; the current programs offer neither.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES TO THE PROBLEM

Foreign assistance for narcotics eradication to the region is largely represented by the UNDCP, which has developed a large-scale program for regional cooperation that includes border control, capacity-building, intelligence-gathering, demand reduction, and control of drug precursors.

UNDCP's major goal in Central Asia was to unite the countries of the region in their response to the threat posed by illicit drugs from Afghanistan. The program has been involved in projects of institution-building and improvement of control measures in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan individually and to improve communications and coordination in drug interdiction among Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan border forces. These projects have been aimed at providing advice on strengthening drug enforcement agencies and funding feasibility studies for land rehabilitation programs in the areas that grow cannabis and opiates. As part of its project in Uzbekistan, the UNDCP established the National Drug Information and Analysis Center within the Uzbek State Commission on Drug Control.

In 1998 two working group meetings on improving cooperation between the affected parties were held. UNDCP held training seminars and established resource centers in Kyrgyzstan, conducted a sociological study in the Osh region and published its findings, and provided grants to NGOs involved in agriculture in that region. It has also helped establish forensic laboratories in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, one in each country. The UNDCP provides funds to support the efforts of the Uzbek institute of genetics to create an effective pathogen specific to opium poppies.

In 1997–2000 UNDCP was involved in a mapping project in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, which was funded by Italy and the United Kingdom. Though the project was established

in July 1997, it did not become operational until the beginning of 1998. Conducted in close cooperation with each country's state commissions for drug control, the project aimed to develop in-country and subregional institutional capabilities for identification and measurement of illicit narcotic drug production by mapping the territories of the illegal growth of opiates and cannabis.

In 1998, 110 people in the three republics participated in the survey part of the project; the survey covered four oblasts in Kazakhstan, six in Kyrgyzstan, and two in Tajikistan. The evaluation revealed that Kyrgyzstan had 5,835 hectares of cannabis, 0.08 hectares of opiates, and 46,433 hectares of ephedra; Kazakhstan had 329,628 hectares of cannabis, 0.57 hectares of opiates, and 88,200 hectares of ephedra; for Tajikistan the respective numbers were 8 hectares, 9.3 hectares, and 3,484 hectares.⁷⁴ The results of the project were presented to relevant officials at each of the countries, but there was no follow-through to ascertain whether any of the sites had been eradicated.

One of the better known projects conducted in the region was the "Osh Knot," which dealt with the volatile situation in this southern Kyrgyz city, the drug trafficking hub in Central Asia. The number of drug addicts and the number of drug-related crimes are increasing in the Osh region while the price of heroin is decreasing. Osh is more than a trafficking center; it is also a supplier center for the local drug market. The decreasing price of heroin can be explained by both an increased supply of the drug and by the desire of drug dealers to create as many addicts as possible before hiking up the price and making enormous profits. General Mameev, former head of the Kyrgyz State Commission on Drug Control, has stated that there are underground laboratories in Osh that turn raw opium into heroin as well as produce synthetic drugs. In addition, 36 such laboratories have been discovered and destroyed in Bishkek.⁷⁵

The objectives of the project "Osh Knot" have been specifically aimed at monitoring the trafficking route from Khorog to Osh. The project provided information to officials concerning drugs, crime, and terrorism in Central Asia. The other goals of the projects were to create a regional cross-border radio communications system and to train 60 officials from the three countries.

These have not been achieved. It is fair to say that the UNDCP drug projects are still largely in their fact-finding stages. In fact, in 1998, President Karimov complained that international organizations were still spending more money studying Central Asia's drug problem than trying to help these countries eradicate it. While Karimov's statement was an exaggeration growing out of frustration, the trend that he notes is in fact true.

In 1993–1998, the UNDCP spent just \$6.8 million in the region (\$2.5 million for institution-building projects and \$4.3 million for mapping, cross border cooperation, etc.). Funding for UNDCP activities was dramatically increased in 1998. In the revised budget for 1998–1999, income estimates were increased to \$148.6 million, and budget estimates to \$153.3 million. In the proposed outline for 2000–2001, income is expected to reach \$175 million and budget estimates are forecast to reach \$213.4 million. In 1998, however, UNDCP estimated that an appropriate response to identified needs in Central Asia would require \$33.7 million or over 15 percent of the organization's budget. It is unlikely that the organization would be able to dedicate such a large amount to the region.

This is clearly not enough money to make a real dent in the problem, and many of the urgently needed projects on institution and capacity building and regional cooperation are not moving forward due to the lack of funds. The scale of funding needed is highlighted by the fact that, according to the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Iran spent at least \$500 million to fortify its border with Afghanistan and was still unable to seal it.⁷⁶

Those working for international drug control projects also complain of the difficulties of working in the region. The French Observatoire Geopolitique de Drogues (OGD) notes that most of the existing UNDCP programs in the region do not involve Turkmenistan, which can potentially make it a more desirable route for the trafficking of Afghan drugs. Turkmenistan is not a member of the Central Asian Economic Community or the CIS customs union, and is becoming more isolated from its former Soviet Central Asian neighbors more generally, while remaining on the best terms with the Afghans of any state in the region.

Difficulties with the Kyrgyz State Commission on Drug Control led to the cancellation of the relatively successful “Osh Knot” project in October 1999 and the planned relocation of the UNDCP regional office from Osh to Tashkent. According to Kasper Doornbusch, advisor to the project, these changes were due to disagreements that the program had with the Kyrgyz. Doornbusch has stated that corruption has made it impossible for the project to function properly. He is also concerned that cancellation of the project would mean a greater transparency of the Osh-Khorog road and the renewal of its use as a main drug-trafficking route.

GRAVE RISKS REMAIN

The collapse of the Soviet Union has forever changed the map of Central Asia as new states have emerged almost overnight. All of them had to adjust to their status and to grapple with new political and economic realities. In this process, concern about drug proliferation was not a priority, a situation that provided a unique opportunity to international drug traffickers. Only when drugs became so widespread that ignoring the problem became impossible did these countries’ leaders turn their attention to the issues and try to figure out a way to combat drug proliferation or the “narcotization” of society, as it is called locally.

Most of the Central Asian officials dealing with the issue either fail to see or refuse to admit the connections among drugs and weapons trafficking, corruption, terrorism, and money laundering. Quite often they treat these activities as completely different sets of issues. They ignore the fact that many of the groups involved in drug trafficking deal in weapons, in addition to being heavily armed themselves. In early October 1998 a humanitarian aid train en route from Iran to Afghanistan was stopped at a checkpoint in Osh, where the customs officials discovered that, in addition to 300 tons of flour, the train’s 17 cars contained 700 tons of weapons being shipped from Iran to Afghanistan, including anti-tank mines, F-1 grenades, ammunition for large caliber machine guns, mines, shells for 122mm artillery guns, and even Grad rocket launchers.

After negotiations, the train was turned around and sent back to Iran. However, according to several reports, it never reached the destination, and virtually disappeared. Many believe that the weapons were for Djuma Namangani’s troops and that he stormed the train and took the cargo. Weapons enter the region from neighboring Afghanistan as well. In 1999 alone, Russian border guards came under attack 35 times from Afghan territory, entered clashes 29 times with armed groups of drug traffickers, and seized as trophies 49 automatic and other firearms and about 20,000 rounds of ammunition.⁷⁷

Drug money also tends to support many members of separatist, radical religious, and terrorist movements. There have recently been numerous allegations of the connection between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and Albanian drug barons who control “the Balkan route” of drug trafficking to Europe. Northern Albania, a haven for drug barons, was also the main base of the KLA. Recent events in Batken fit the same pattern of sponsorship by a drug mafia eager to destabilize the situation. In 1997 Tajik authorities seized 8,000 kilograms of heroin reportedly

owned by Iranian drug lord Hajj Ghulam Baloch, who for years had been financing the warring Afghan factions.⁷⁸

Similarly, it has repeatedly been reported that Osama bin-Laden finances his terrorist activities with profits from his opium syndicate that he operates from western Afghanistan. It has also been reported that he considers opium a powerful weapon in the *Jihad* (Holy War). Indian intelligence officers reported that bin Laden controls about 60 illegal heroin laboratories.⁷⁹ However, direct ties between bin Laden and Central Asia's drug mafia have yet to be substantiated.

Whether or not bin Laden is directly involved in the end is less important than the fact that the drug industry is an important outlet for organized crime in the region and should be treated as such. When there is demand there will always be a supply. The business is lucrative and, if successful, offers almost instantaneous rewards. Thus, there will never be a shortage of volunteers. Over time trafficking groups will only become stronger and more organized and will branch out into other activities. In the post-Soviet space the privatization of former state enterprises provides another outlet for drug money. Each of the countries has embarked on a privatization program, though some programs were more radical than others were. Kazakhstan privatized over 75 percent of its assets, Kyrgyzstan over 62 percent, Uzbekistan about 45 percent, Turkmenistan 25 percent, and Tajikistan between 20 and 30 percent. The privatization process provided an important opportunity for money laundering and legal investment of drug money. The Russian Council on Foreign and Defense Policy estimates that in 1996 at least 900 billion rubles (approximately \$180 billion) of profits from the drug trade was used to purchase shares of various Russian enterprises, particularly in the energy sector and in telecommunications.⁸⁰

Drug trafficking has become one of the main sources of revenue for the existing criminal groups that are also involved in money laundering. The Central Asian states do not seem to care that once money is laundered it is likely to infiltrate the political systems and potentially thwart most of the democracy-building attempts in the region. According to Interpol, the drug mafia controls governments of at least 12 countries.⁸¹ Drug trade is always associated with corruption. Enormous profits enjoyed by drug dealers are very tempting for officials to control and often they can be bribed to turn a blind eye to money laundering and drug trafficking.

If drugs are allowed to flow freely across Central Asia, the whole region can succumb to a variant of the "Dutch disease" with all industries in the economy stagnating or contracting, except those that are drug-related. This starts a vicious cycle that makes these countries even more dependent on the illicit drug trade. It has already been reported that sheep husbandry is declining in Kyrgyzstan as more and more people find drug trafficking a lot more profitable.⁸² This situation can have a major impact on the country's balance of payments, for drug trade tends to lead to an influx of dollars or other currencies. Such developments can in turn affect trade, financial, and monetary cycles, as a result of currency appreciation and the subsequent loss of competitiveness. This leads to a further deterioration of the situation and makes drug production the only viable industry. Small economies tend to be the worst hit. For example, in 1990, Bolivia's coca and cocaine exports were equivalent to half the size of its total legal exports.⁸³ As a result, the country had to overvalue its exchange rate because an influx of dollars from drug trafficking operations prevented the local leather and textile industries from developing in the case of cheap imports from abroad.

In the early 1990s illicit drug trade generated about 3.5 percent of GDP in Pakistan, 6 percent in Peru, 7 percent in Colombia, and 9 percent in Bolivia.⁸⁴ In addition, when money comes back into the country it is not necessarily used for productive purposes. Large portions of it are used to ensure the survival of the trafficking organizations, which means bribery, investments in weapons,

and so on. If illicit sector capital flows are large, governments can lose their ability to conduct effective monetary and fiscal policy. The situation in Afghanistan is a vivid example of how drugs can help finance a prolonged civil war and defeat virtually any possibility of economic reconstruction.

While there is a risk that the Central Asian states could eventually meet the same fate, there is a lack of understanding between the governments of these countries and the international organizations involved in the region. The Central Asians believe that all they need is equipment and money.

To make any level of assistance helpful, however, it is imperative that they rethink their general approach to the problem and have a coordinated effort not only by various law enforcement agencies within the region and without, but also with international organizations and agencies dealing with social issues.

For this concerted effort to succeed, corrupt practices should be made punishable as severely as drug-related crimes. UNDCP officials believe that if the situation does not improve, additional assistance will not be beneficial. For as the case of the Russian 201st Motorized Division suggests, it is likely that more sophisticated equipment will be used to aid drug traffickers, not to fight them.

This new strategy, though, should be implemented by organizations that have clearly defined responsibilities and jurisdictions. Currently, in many of these countries, ministries of interior, security services, and customs officials are all responsible for drug enforcement policies. They not only duplicate each other's efforts but also do not have a well-established system of sharing information. For example, in Turkmenistan the border guards, customs officials, and security service share responsibility for patrolling the border. In Uzbekistan the lack of coordination among security, customs, and internal forces creates confusion. In addition, none of these agencies specializes in counternarcotics. The established National Drug Information and Analysis Center is supposed to minimize mistrust, rivalry, and duplication of efforts among these agencies, but it has no operational authority.

As we have already mentioned, UNDCP officials are concerned that the countries in the region are not willing to adopt or implement a comprehensive drug combating strategy and a master plan prepared by the program. However, various international organizations that provide technical and financial assistance to the region also tend to duplicate each other's efforts. This problem is not unique to Central Asia: in the United States 28 different agencies deal with drug enforcement issues and invariably step on each other's toes. In Central Asia, where funding is much more restricted, the need for a "master plan" to coordinate the activities of the UNDCP, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Europe, the Subcommittee on Drug Control of the UN Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), UNESCO, WHO, OSCE, EU, the Aga Khan Foundation, and others is all the more pressing.

The first step in this direction has been made. The UNDCP, Interpol, and the World Customs Organization (WCO) in June 1999 completed developing a database on the extent of drug abuse worldwide, which includes information provided by the three agencies on the number of drug abusers and the ways and means of drug abuse, as well as on consumption patterns. In addition, to facilitate its creation, the UNDCP in cooperation with ECO has developed a program of assistance to countries that border Afghanistan.

The Central Asian states should not only develop a common response to the threat of drug proliferation but should involve other regional powers in the process. According to a UNDCP official, China would like to join the Memorandum of Understanding and asked the UNDCP office in Osh to coordinate and help establish cooperation between the Syntsyuan-Uigur Autonomous region in China, the Osh oblast in Kyrgyzstan, and the Gorno-Badakhshan region in Tajikistan. The inquiry was relayed to relevant regional officials but no progress has been made. China is interested in cooperation with Central Asian states, for it is afraid that drug money from the region will support its Turkic-speaking Uighur minority in its quest for independence. In November 1999 Uzbekistan became the first Central Asian state to sign an agreement with China on cooperation in the area.

Relations with Russia are also regularly put under strain by the drug problem. Russia is becoming increasingly concerned about drugs being delivered to its territory by mafia groups from Central Asia and the Caucasus. Russian human rights observers estimate that 17.1 percent of the drugs enter the Russian Federation from Uzbekistan, 13.6 percent from Tajikistan, and 12.7 percent from Kazakhstan. It has been estimated that 80 percent of heroin seized in Russia entered the country from Central Asian states.⁸⁵ As a result, the Russian Council on Foreign and Defense Policy has issued a report on the problem of drug proliferation in Russia in which it has accused Central Asian citizens of spreading this disease and proposed to find a way to limit their entry into Russia. The drug problem thus generally contributes to racial prejudice experienced by Central Asians travelling to or working in Russia, as they (and those of Caucasian nationalities) become special targets of identification checks and other police nets.

The fight against drugs should be conducted not only by the law enforcement agencies, but by a host of other government structures. But combating it effectively will put an enormous burden on these states. More funds should be channeled into education campaigns. Distinctions between producer and consumer territories become blurred. Drug use may be relatively low in Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, but it will not always stay this way. It is much easier to deal with this problem now before it gets seriously out of hand. So far Kazakhstan is the only country in the region that has started (in 1999) a special drug education campaign with the curriculum developed with the assistance of the United States and the UNDCP. Only recently did the UNDCP become more involved in community-oriented programs. For example, United Nations volunteers are involved in the project to promote community-based development for poverty reduction in Kyrgyzstan. The idea is to create programs that offer alternatives to the drug trade.

Such social programs seem currently to be beyond the financial reach of these states. Yet failure to implement them will create an even larger economic burden for these countries. Drugs pose one of the major security risks in the region, and may even prove to be a source of state collapse. Future security risks can take any number of forms. Insurgent and terrorist organizations will continue to deal in illicit drugs to ensure their survival and financial self-sufficiency, putting the future of their states at risk. Civil order will also be undermined by confrontations between drug-trafficking groups over spheres of control.

It is clear that Central Asia is completely unprepared to deal with the threat posed by the proliferation of drugs and has no resources to pay for the enormous economic and social costs associated with the problem. There is no shared regional understanding of the problem; each country instead focuses only on its particular aspects. There is also a discontinuity between the Western approach to the problem that views criminalization, corruption, and social costs as part of the problem and the local approach that focuses on drug trafficking in a narrow sense.

Those engaged in the illicit drug trade are interested in destabilizing the region to advance their goals. The enormous profits that drugs generate are likely to support all forces that can have devastating effects on these states and on those well beyond their borders. Drug money has and will support all sorts of radical movements and terrorist organizations. Political, social, and economic changes in Central Asia can affect Russia, China, Afghanistan, and Iran. The region can potentially become a major “hot spot.” It is time the world paid closer attention to this problem and helped Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan take charge of the situation before it gets completely out of control.

NOTES

¹ Activities of the United Nations International Drug Control Program, Report of the Executive Director, March 1999, E/CN.7/1999/6, p. 7.

² Eva Bertram, Morris Blachman, Kenneth Sharpe, and Peter Andreas, *Drug War Politics: The Price of Denial* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 10.

³ *Rethinking International Drug Control: New Directions for U.S. Policy* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1997), p. 23.

⁴ Similar to a late 19th century Japanese belief that their habits of drinking sake and being more active than the Chinese would ensure that opiates would not become part of their culture, just as they did in China. For a more detailed discussion, see Kathryn Meyer and Terry Parssinen, *Webs of Smoke* (Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998).

⁵ There has always been speculation about the size of the illicit drug harvest, and it is hard to feel much confidence in current international statistics. The UN and U.S. statistics are not in agreement. In 1999 the UNDCP estimated that opium production in Afghanistan was 4,581 metric tons, while the U.S. government estimates this figure to be slightly over 1,600 metric tons. Both sets of data do exhibit the same trend; however, there is a substantial possibility that both underestimate the scale of the problem.

⁶ Ephedrine is a precursor to methamphetamine and methcathinone, powerful central nervous system stimulants.

⁷ In 1997 the Chinese confiscated 27 tons of precursors bound for heroin laboratories in Pakistan. Presentation by Kasper Doornbusch, Chief Technical Adviser to UNDCP/UNOPS Project “Osh Knot,” made at the May 1999 conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

⁸ UNDCP, UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem, Information Sheet no. 2, June 1998.

⁹ UNDCP, *Afghanistan: Annual Opium Poppy Survey 1999* (Islamabad: UNDCP Regional Office, 1999), p. ii.

¹⁰ Presentation by Dr. Vladimir Fenotepov, Head of the Program for Central Asia and Eastern Europe, West and Central Asia, the Near and Middle East, UNDCP, made at the SAIS/Central Asian and the Caucasus Institute, November 18, 1999.

¹¹ Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report* (Washington, DC: March 1999), p. xii.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. xii.

¹³ UNDCP, “Crops from which Drugs are Extracted and Appropriate Strategies for Their Eradication,” E/CN.7/1996/11, p. 14.

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- ¹⁴ UNDCP, "Report on the Activities Funded by the Fund of the UNDCP during the Biennium 1998–99," Commission on Narcotic Drugs, E/CN.7/1999/22, September 29, 1999.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- ¹⁶ Ahmed Rashid, "The Taliban: Exporting Extremism," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 78, no. 6 (November/ December 1999), p. 33.
- ¹⁷ The UNDCP estimates that in 1998 about 2,000 tons of heroin equivalent were stockpiled at the Tajik-Afghan border (E/CN.7/1999/6, p. 8).
- ¹⁸ UNDCP, *Statistics and Analysis on Supply of and Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances* (Vienna: UNDCP, 1996), p. 21.
- ¹⁹ For a more detailed discussion, see L-N. Hsu, "The Dynamic Interaction Between Family and Substance Dependence: An International Perspective," *Bulletin on Narcotics*, no. 1, 1994.
- ²⁰ For a more detailed discussion, see T.A. Beishenbayev, "Drug Proliferation in the Kyrgyz Republic and Counter Measures by the Ministry of Internal Affairs," paper presented at the May 1999 conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- ²¹ *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, p. ix.
- ²² Annual Report 1997/98, UNDCP Survey on Central Asia, 1998.
- ²³ Mohammed Bergenev, "Drug Proliferation in Kazakhstan," paper presented at the May 1999 conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- ²⁴ Olzhas Musin, "Kazakhstan in the Drug Trade and Cultivation," paper presented at the May 1999 conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- ²⁵ Djuma Namangani (Khojiev) is a leader of the Uzbek Islamic Movement responsible for the August 1999 hostage taking in Batken. The core of the military unit under his command (200-250 fighters as of 1998) consists of natives of the eastern Uzbek town of Namangan. He is rumored to have received military training in Afghanistan and Chechnya and spiritual guidance in Saudi Arabia.
- ²⁶ Yuri Razgulyaev, "Drug Mafia Has Received a Green Light: The Kyrgyz Authorities are Removing the Last Obstacle in the Way of Tajik and Afghan Heroin," *Vremya MN*, October 20, 1999, p. 8.
- ²⁷ In June 1999 Turkmenistan became the first CIS country to introduce visas for all foreign nationals entering its territory.
- ²⁸ Yuri Chernogaev, "Russia Struggles with Bolivian Drug Mafia on the Tajik-Afghan Border," *Kommersant-Daily*, December 17, 1999, p. 11.
- ²⁹ Council on Foreign and Defense Policy of the Russian Federation, "Drug Proliferation in Russia," report, 1997.
- ³⁰ For example, in 1997–98 Uzbekistan alone seized 70 tons of Russian and Ukrainian precursors bound for Southwest Asia.
- ³¹ It has been reported that Tajiks control drug markets in Moscow and that Georgians, Armenians, and even Azerbaijanis play only secondary roles.
- ³² UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, "Briefing Note: Drug Trafficking in Central Asia," prepared in May 1999.
- ³³ The highest population density of 84 people per square kilometer has been registered in the Khaltoon region.

- ³⁴ The only other source of income for the region was financial assistance from the Aga Khan Development Network, but by the end of 1999 it has been announced that this program would be terminated.
- ³⁵ The group's leader was killed four years ago in a bomb explosion.
- ³⁶ According to unofficial estimates, incomes of those living in the rural areas are ten times less.
- ³⁷ http://www.redstar.ru/dpsie/delo/sp_force/sp_for_1.html.
- ³⁸ Presentation by Dr. Vladimir Fenotepov.
- ³⁹ Commission on Narcotic Drugs, "Illicit Drug Traffic and Supply," Report of the Secretariat, United Nations Economic and Social Council, March 1996 (E/CN.7/1996/9).
- ⁴⁰ UNDCP, *Afghanistan: Annual Opium Poppy Survey 1999* (Islamabad: UNDCP Regional Office, 1999), p. iii.
- ⁴¹ UNDCP, *World Drug Report* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 131. UNESCO also reports that distributors in consumer countries receive 54 percent, carriers and international traffickers get 26 percent, processors and national middlemen get 15 percent, and producers get 2-5 percent. "The Globalization of the Drug Trade," UNESCO Sources, no. 111, April 1999. See <http://www.unesco.org/most/drugs.htm>
- ⁴² UNDCP, "Economic and Social Consequences of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking," no. 6 (Vienna: UNDCP, 1996).
- ⁴³ UNDCP, *World Drug Report* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 142.
- ⁴⁴ Gennady Voskresensky, "Free Market for Drugs," *Vechernii Bishkek*, 1998.
- ⁴⁵ Relative decline in the amount of drugs trafficked through the region in 1998 can be explained by considerable damage to the Afghanistan opium poppy crop caused by unseasonal rains.
- ⁴⁶ http://www.redstar.ru/dosie/delo/sp_force/sp_for_1.html. However, some sources estimate that 50 tons of illicit drugs were confiscated in 1997 alone. See <http://www.svoboda.org/programs/SP/1998/SP-24.shtml>.
- ⁴⁷ V. Volodchenko and V. Fedosenko, "I Request To Be Left Behind Barbed Wire....," *Rossiyskaya gazeta*, April 28, 1999, p. 16, as reported by FBIS-SOV-1999-0429.
- ⁴⁸ *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, p. 425; and data provided to authors by UNDCP regional office in Tashkent.
- ⁴⁹ Kasymbek Mambetov, "Drug Addiction in Kyrgyzstan," paper presented at the May 1999 conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
- ⁵⁰ UNDCP, *World Drug Report*, pp. 321, 303, 291, 283.
- ⁵¹ UNAIDS, *UN-Facilitated Response to HIV/AIDS, STD and Drug Abuse in Central Asian Countries 1996-98*, Almaty, Kazakhstan, January 1999, p. 15.
- ⁵² UNDCP, "Economic and Social Consequences of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking," p.16.
- ⁵³ *Itar-Tass* in Russian 0505 GMT 9 September 1999, as reported by FBIS-SOV-1999-0909.
- ⁵⁴ UNAIDS, *UN-Facilitated Response to HIV/AIDS, STD and Drug Abuse in Central Asian Countries, 1996-1998*, p. 14.
- ⁵⁵ UNIS/NAR/678, 1 December 1999.
- ⁵⁶ UNESCO, Management of Social Transformations Program, *Globalization and the International Drug Problem in Central Asia and Pakistan* (Tashkent: UNESCO, 1999), p. 101.
- ⁵⁷ The Kyrgyz State Commission on Drug Control, *Drug Proliferation in the Kyrgyz Republic* (Bishkek, 1999).

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- ⁵⁸ UNDCP web page (<http://www.undcp.org>).
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- ⁶⁰ *Itar-Tass* in English, 1324 GMT, March 14, 1996, as reported by FBIS-TDD-96-012-L.
- ⁶¹ *Crime in Russia*, no. 2 (12), 18–24 January 1998.
- ⁶² *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, p. 682.
- ⁶³ In September 1998, Colonel Abdulaev, commander of a Kyrgyz military unit and a 22-year veteran on the force, was sentenced to five years in prison for heading a criminal group that dealt in heroin. (*Kabar*, September 21, 1998.) In February 1997 three members of the Osh internal affairs department were arrested on charges of heroin trafficking into Russia. They have been sentenced to ten years in prison. Kyrgyz State Commission on Drug Control, *Drug Proliferation in the Kyrgyz Republic*.
- ⁶⁴ A. Gold, “Being High: It is Impossible to Defeat Drug Mafia or Who is the Main Drug Boss in the Republic?” *Vechernii Bishkek*, May 27, 1999, p. 10.
- ⁶⁵ *Prestupnost'*, no. 2 (12), 18–24 January, 1998.
- ⁶⁶ Uzbek security arrested Andrew Kline, who was a citizen of the United States living in Bolivia. He was reportedly a coordinator of activities between the Afghan and South American drug dealers.
- ⁶⁷ Paper presented by General Mameev, then head of the Kyrgyz State Commission on Control of Drugs, at the May 1999 conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
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- ⁶⁹ Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, *Commonwealth of Independent States in 1998* (Moscow, 1999), p. 13.
- ⁷⁰ As of October 1999, General Mameev was deputy secretary of the Security Council of Kyrgyzstan.
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- ⁷² Mohammed Bergenev, “Drug Proliferation in Kazakhstan.”
- ⁷³ Each participant was also eligible to receive a kilogram of rice and a liter of cotton oil per 50 kilograms of cannabis destroyed.
- ⁷⁴ Temir Aziz, “Mapping of the Regions with Illegal Drug Cultivation,” paper presented at the May 1999 conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
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- ⁷⁸ *The Nation*, September 30, 1997, p. 4, as reported by FBIS-TDD-97-275.
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- ⁸³ UNDCP, “Economic and Social Consequences of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking,” p. 26.

⁸⁴ UNDCP, *World Drug Report*, p. 143.

⁸⁵ *Interfax* in English 0913 GMT, August 4, 1999, as reported by FBIS-NES-1999-0804.