

ECO Plan of Action on Drug Control

REVISED ECO PLAN OF ACTION
ON DRUG CONTROL

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INTRODUCTION

In the course of the XXth Century, the problem of drug abuse reached global dimensions inflicting heavy tolls on the social, political and economic well being of the world community. There is an ever-growing international consensus on the need to evolve and implement effective long-term strategies to deal with different aspects of the drug problem. Governments need to develop clearly defined national plans to address this complex issue. It has also become evident that without international coordination and cooperation no matter how developed and sophisticated they may be, the achievements of the national plans would be limited.

Member Governments of ECO, subsequent to the enlargement of the Organization into a ten-member major regional entity, acted in consensus to address the problem of narcotics abuse with a regional perspective. Parallel to the creation of a full-fledged technical committee with a specific mandate to promote regional cooperation in the fight against narcotics abuse, the subject was included as a major policy objective in the "Istanbul Declaration" adopted by the Council of Ministers and endorsed by the Heads of State and Government on the eve of the Second ECO Summit in Istanbul in 1993.

Istanbul Declaration mandated the preparation of a comprehensive plan for effectively combating the growing menace of narcotic drugs. Accordingly, the Committee on Drug Control prepared, an outline plan titled ECO PLAN ON DRUG CONTROL, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers.

At the conclusion of the Third ECO Summit Meeting held in Islamabad on 14-15 March 1995, the Heads of State and Government:

"RECOGNIZED that drug abuse constitutes a serious menace to the region, as well as the world at large, welcomed the adoption of the ECO Plan on Drug Control, directed that the Plan be implemented expeditious and asked the Secretary General to mobilize international assistance to promote effective regional cooperation action in the field of narcotics abuse control."

In the mean time, Regional Planning Council of ECO, in its 5th meeting held in Tehran (Iran) on 7-11 January 1995, considered the work undertaken by the Committee on Drug Control and proposed the formation of an open-ended Expert Group to facilitate the preparation of plans of action on three priority sectors stipulated in the mandate of the Committee, which also constitute the framework of ECO Plan on Drug Control. These sectors are as follows:

- a) Supply Reduction;
- b) Suppression of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances; and
- c) Demand Reduction, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Drug Users.

RPC recommended that detailed operative plans be prepared to address each of these topics. The Council of Ministers approved RPC's recommendations in its fifth meeting held in Ashgabat on 21-23 January 1995.

In pursuance of the foregoing, the Expert Group met in Tehran on 5-7 November 1995 and reviewed the draft regional plans of action. The Group desired that three plans be incorporated in a single document. Accordingly the document titled "ECO PLAN OF ACTION ON DRUG CONTROL" was prepared and submitted to the Committee on Drug Control in its third meeting held in Ashkhabad on 5-6 December 1995. The Committee revised, and referred the document to the Regional Planning Council for further consideration. The Plan of Action has been adopted by the Council of Ministers of ECO in its sixth meeting held in Ashkabad in April 1996.

The 1st Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) on Drug Control was held in Turkey on 20-22 December, 2005. The SOM after detailed deliberations on the status of implementation of the ECO Plan of Action on Drug Control recommended the holding of 1st ECO Experts Group Meeting for revising (i) the ECO Plan of Action on Drug Control (ii) study to enhance the capacity of DCCU and consider the possibility of transforming DCCU into a Regional Center for Drug Control and Organized Crimes (RCDCOC).

The 1st ECO Experts Group Meeting on Drug Control Matters was held in Tehran on 14-16 April, 2008 and the EGM agreed on the following Revised ECO Plan of Action on Drug Control:-

CHAPTER - I

SUPPLY REDUCTION

I. OBJECTIVES

THE NEED FOR A REGIONAL STRATEGY TO CONTROL ILLICIT POPPY CULTIVATION AND HEROIN PRODUCTION

"Supply Reduction" envisages reduction in cultivation of narcotic plants and elimination of illicit narcotic laboratories (heroin, morphine, psychotropic and synthetic etc.) which requires adoption of a Regional Strategy to control poppy cultivation, heroin production and trafficking. In the absence of such a strategy, the destruction of huge quantities of poppy in a state would not automatically lead to reduction in the supply of Opium or Heroin for the users in other countries. The reason for the abundant supply might be the easy trafficking of opium and its derivatives produced in another country. Moreover, suppression of narcotics production in a country may result in increased production in another country of the region due to balloon effect. Therefore, a Regional Strategy for the entire ECO Region constitutes an orient necessity to facilitate simultaneous and coordinated action by all the Member States.

II. PRIORITY AREAS OF ACTIVITY

The main spheres of activity in the domain of supply reduction are as follows:

- 1) Poppy Crop Substitution and Area Development Projects.
- 2) Elimination of illicit drug producing laboratories.
- 3) Strengthening Control of the trafficking and use of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and chemical precursors.

III. SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

In order to provide the rural population dependent on illicit poppy cultivation with alternative sources of employment and income generation opportunities, Poppy Crop Substitution and Area Development Projects may be executed in selected areas. While planning specific area development projects, first priority should be given to the provision of the physical infrastructure such as roads and bridges. After the initial opening of the areas, further development of health, education, agriculture, irrigation and other projects may be undertaken. In the agriculture sector attention needs to be paid to increase the expenditure on agricultural research and development including the initiation of model farms, demonstration plots, farmer training courses, development of improved seeds, introduction and distribution of high yield fruit plants and vegetables etc. The links and interaction between the farmers and the agricultural institutions may be strengthened. Easy and subsidized inputs may be provided for areas producing poppy plants. Small-scale agricultural schemes may be promoted through interest free credits. To prevent resentful attitude and possible reactions of the illicit poppy producing communities, sense of participatory development may be promoted. The communities may be mobilized for playing a more active role in the development activities and projects. Common interest groups may be organized and mobilized in project areas to attract external resources into their particular localities. Crop substitution programmes need to focus on introduction of high-value crops to enable the farmers to earn at least an honourable livelihood. The implementation of developmental activities mentioned above shall be followed by strict enforcement of ban on the illicit cultivation of opium poppy.

The enforcement of eradication of illicit poppy cultivation may be introduced under two categories.

1. In areas where development projects are in progress, development infrastructure is in place and there is no problem of law and order, the ban on illicit poppy cultivation may be enforced at once.

2. In areas where development projects are under implementation and the areas are sensitive from the point of view of law and order or other reasons, a careful enforcement strategy including forcible destruction of illicit crops may be adopted. In such areas the enforcement strategy may be implemented gradually through phases.

IV. ELIMINATION OF ILLICIT DRUGS (HEROIN, MORPHINE AND OTHER DERIVATIVES) LABORATORIES

The subject laboratories do not need sophisticated equipment/machinery. These laboratories normally consist of a few simple and light appliances, which could be concealed easily and shifted without any difficulty in case of staging of operations against them by the law enforcement agencies. With their inherent mobility and makeshift nature, they may disappear from one place only to re-appear in some other comparatively safer and inaccessible area. As such, law enforcement agencies have to maintain a constant watch on the movement of illicit laboratories and regularly chase them so as to seize every possible opportunity of destroying them. It is therefore, essential that necessary operational and legal arrangements be instituted in order to neutralize the establishment of these laboratories with minimum possible use of force. Collection of reliable information and intelligence about the number, location, ownership etc. of the laboratories is imperative.

V. **ENHANCING COOPERATION TO PREVENT NARCOTIC DRUG TRAFFICKING AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES AND CHEMICAL PRECURSORS**

Enhanced control measures are needed over the movement of illicit narcotic drugs and psychotropic substance and chemical precursors from the point of manufacture or importation to the point of dispensing in pharmacies, hospitals and medical practitioners in order to prevent the possible leakage into illicit channels. Import, export, supervision and sale of these items need to be well regulated and vigilantly monitored. To prevent their likely flow into illicit channels, requests for permission to import raw materials or products should be carefully scrutinized also through investigation of the earlier sales. Requests for increased imports should be considered only if they are supported by concrete evidence of increased market demand for the end product. The number of companies producing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances should be kept to the minimum for effective monitoring. It should be made obligatory, through statutory orders, for the companies to maintain exact record of the imported or manufactured narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Similarly the sale should be authorized by registered medical practitioner and/or legal agency(ies) on condition to maintain the records.

Member States of ECO may adopt measures to prevent the diversion of imported narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and chemical precursor. Imports of all substances included in Table-I and Table-II of the 1988 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances may be restricted only to pharmaceutical and industrial consumers after due verification of their requirements and authority.

VI. **INITIATIVES AT NATIONAL LEVEL**

The following steps may be taken by all member Governments as early as possible.

- 1) Imposition of ban on:
 - a) Cultivation of opium poppy, cannabis except for exclusive use for medical scientific or industrial purposes.

- b) Import, export, transportation and transshipment of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances except in accordance with national rules and regulations made by concerned States and under license, permit or authorization for that purpose.
 - c) Diversion of narcotic drugs psychotropic substances and chemical precursors to illicit channels.
 - d) Owning, managing and, operating any place/equipment for the purpose of manufacture or illicit production of cannabis, opium derivatives, narcotic drugs psychotropic substance controlled substance except with the condition of a license/permit for medical and scientific purposes.
- 2) Provision of alternate sources of employment and income generation opportunities to the people dependent upon illicit crop cultivation.
 - 3) Initiation of poppy and cannabis crop substitution programmes and alternative development projects.
 - 4) In areas where development projects are under implementation and the areas are sensitive from the point of view of law and order or other reasons, a careful enforcement strategy including forcible destruction of illicit crops may be adopted. In such areas the enforcement strategy may be implemented gradually and eradication of illicit poppy crop and heroin laboratories.
 - 5) Enactment of necessary legislation to give effect to recommendations aimed in sub-paras 1-(a) to 1-(d) above.
 - 6) Collection of reliable information and intelligence about the number and location of illicit manufacturing laboratories to be followed by their elimination/destruction.

VII. INITIATIVES AT REGIONAL LEVEL

- 1) ECO Member States should exchange information relating to illicit poppy and cannabis cultivation, as per FORM-A (annexed).
- 2) ECO Member States should exchange information relating to instruments/chemicals seized during destruction of illicit Laboratories.
- 3) ECO Member States may introduce joint regional measures for supply control. In this context, specific measures and their effective implementation in

areas/regions of extensive illicit production of opium is of paramount importance, In this regard, donor assistance need to be sought for implementation of Development Projects to promote substitution of illicit crop cultivation by alternative development projects.

CHAPTER - II

FIGHT AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES

I. OBJECTIVES

- a) Institution building at the level of law enforcement agencies;
- b) Enhance their enforcement capabilities
- c) Increase effectiveness of the criminal courts
- d) strengthen the ability of governments to tackle with the new emerging drugs and precursors

a. Capacity Building

Implementation of training programmes tailored according to the needs of individual member states is of utmost importance.

National training courses shall be designed keeping in view the "United Nations Drug Law Enforcement Training Manual" prepared by the UNODC, which could provide the national authorities with relevant models and guidelines on the patterns methods and techniques to be put sued.

Member States shall explore the possibilities of obtaining international assistance for capacity building programmes through UNODC, ECO, as well as any other international organization.

b. Technical Equipments for supply reduction

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Effective utilization of electronic, mechanical, optical or other devices during search and surveillance is indispensable for the success of operations. Increased application of modern devices would improve the performance of law enforcement personnel.

Requirements for technical equipment may vary from one country to another. Firstly, member States could prepare an inventory of technical equipment needed. The prioritized qualitative and quantitative list of requirements shall be prepared accordingly.

In addition to national resources, bilateral and multilateral assistance could be mobilized in order to off-set the financing of the procurement of requisite equipment. The ECO-DCCU should approach different international donors / agencies for the requisite financial assistance.

Proper and effective utilization of technical equipment is possible only through well-trained law enforcement personnel. For this purpose, acquisition of sophisticated technical equipment shall always be followed by suitable training programmes.

c. Reward System

Member States may consider the institution of appropriate legal framework and operational modalities for the implementation of reward system in their respective countries.

Intelligence gathering is of paramount importance in the fight against drug trafficking. One of the significant method pursued in this process to gather information is to make use of informers.

A large number of informers provide information in return for cash payment and it is considered that the informer who provides information for financial gains could be usually considered as a reliable source of information.

Law enforcement personnel and informers who take part in successful operations could be rewarded according to the type and quantities of the seized drugs on case to case basis.

The model for the reward system shall be determined on the basis of national laws, decrees and regulations without harming the incentive nature of the rewarding system.

d. Money Laundering and Drug Related Crimes

Deprivation of drug offenders from the proceeds of their criminal offenses and thereby, elimination of their main incentive is yet another important method in the fight against illicit drugs. Relevant international conventions including Article 5 and other relevant provisions of the 1988 Convention on Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals, Member States may institute measures, as deemed appropriate to enable their competent authorities to identify, trace and freeze or seize the proceeds, property, instruments, facilities and any other assets acquired through drug money for the purpose of eventual confiscation.

III. INITIATIVES AT REGIONAL LEVEL

a. Drug Control Coordination Unit (DCCU):

The Drug Control Coordination Unit (DCCU) has been absorbed in to the ECO Secretariat since 2006 and is now operational. The DCCU, in consultation with the UNODC and other relevant agencies, will prepare and implement projects and programs to strengthen national law enforcement agencies and promote cooperation among them. It may also engage in instructive programmes and activities aimed at full implementation of international drug conventions. The Unit shall serve as a channel of information and legal and technical assistance to member states. As member states are aware, DCCU is focusing on all kinds of transnational organized crimes. To build the capacity to tackle current situation, enhancement of the staff strength is necessary.

b. Computerized Communications Network

In the framework of international cooperation, one of the vital factors with positive effect on the success in fight against illicit drug trafficking is rapid and accurate exchange of information between and among states concerning all aspects of the offences simulated in Article 3, paragraph 1 of the 1988 Convention.

Most practical and rapid means of exchange of information is the creation of a computerized network among the focal points to be designated by Member States.

The ECO-DCCU with the assistance of Member States can provide certain soft-ware for the purposes of exchanging information and those programmers can envisage system so that if some member states have not send the information, other member states can recognize it.

The Drug Control Coordination Unit, in consultation with concerned international agencies, shall prepare a feasibility report along with cost estimates for a Regional Drug Communications Network and explore the possibilities of implementing the project through international assistance. The DCCU shall also elaborate a format for the information to be used in this network in consultation with member governments.

c. Drug Liaison Officers (DLOs)

Assignment of DLOs on the basis of reciprocity is considered to be a highly efficient means of cooperation.

To facilitate effective co-ordination between their competent agencies and services, Member States should exchange DLOs on the basis of bilateral agreements.

d. Controlled Delivery:

The law enforcement technique of controlled delivery is widely considered to be an efficient tool in identifying and neutralizing transnational drug trafficking organizations.

Taking into account Article 11 of the 1988 UN Convention, Member States may introduce the necessary measures including enabling legislation to allow the appropriate use of controlled delivery at regional level on the basis of bilateral agreements and arrangements.

e. Capacity Building

New Regional Training Centres in the ECO Member States would be established in order to organize training programmes (seminars and workshops and etc.) to upgrade the awareness and efficiency of National Drug Control and Law Enforcement personnel.

DEMAND REDUCTION, TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION OF DRUG USERS

In order to address the complexities of the illicit drug use, extensive cooperation among governmental and non-governmental agencies is needed through a multi-disciplinary strategy. The case involves preventive, harm reduction measures, remedial and rehabilitation measures to be engaged simultaneously on a very wide social platform. In addition to UNODC, active cooperation of the World Health Organization (WHO) is also integrative.

The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking convened in 1987 has decided that a balanced approach is needed to control drug abuse. Moreover, drug demand reduction measures including prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and harm reduction of drug users are no less important than the "supply reduction".

I. OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Reducing point prevalence of illicit drug use.
- 2) Minimizing the level and impact of drug related crimes.
- 3) Minimizing the level of health and social harms of drug use.

II. INITIATIVES AT NATIONAL LEVEL:

1. Prevention Strategy

1/a. Principles:

- i. Evolving a general attitude against all substances of abuse.
- ii. Selection of modest, measurable and accessible objectives.
- iii. Prioritization of the objectives.
- iv. Attaching priority to most at risk groups.
- V. Support and empowerment of Non-Governmental Organizations.

1/b. Activities:

- i. Public awareness programmes particularly through mass media.
- ii. Educational programmes aiming at life skill training.
- iii. Intervention programmes including crisis intervention, hot and consultation lines, counseling centers, social workers, and legal advisory services.

- iv. Extra-curricular activities i.e. recreational programmes including sports.
- v. DCCU may provide the requisite funds through UNODC for carrying out above-mentioned activities in the Member States.

2. Treatment and Rehabilitation Strategy

2/a. Principles:

- i. Adoption of effective treatment and harm reduction (subject to national policy/law) modalities.
- ii. Utilization of existing facilities within health sector (public, private and NGOs).
- iii. Easy access to treatment and harm reduction services (subject to national policy/law).
- iv. Initiation and encouraging of cost-effective treatment and harm reduction programmes (subject to national policy/law).
- v. Encouraging participation of family members/friends.
- vi. Encouraging and seeking support of local communities and NGOs.
- vii. Involvement of self-help groups through participation in treatment and harm reduction (subject to national policy/law) and rehabilitation programmes.
- viii. Adoption of non-medical treatment including psychotherapy and counseling modalities keeping in view the local traditions, customs and culture.

2/b. Programmes:

- i) Setting up mental health care follow up, half way and rehabilitation centers.
- ii) Adopting and applying maintenance programmes (subject to national policy/law).

3. Supporting Non-Governmental Organizations

III. INITIATIVES AT REGIONAL LEVEL

1. The DCCU shall be expeditiously activated and parallel to other projects, shall also deal with research work and other activities aiming at drug demand reduction and offer its services to the member states in following areas:

- a. Developing information, diagnostic, monitoring and evaluation systems of drug abuse at regional level.
 - b. Collecting, maintaining, exchanging and disseminating information on a regular and continuous basis.
 - c. Analyzing information and preparing regional programmes on drug demand reduction in light of the analysis.
 - d. Conducting the logical research and epistemological studies to better understand the dynamics and causes of drug abuse and to identify the populations affected.
2. A regional Data Bank may be set up within the DCCU to centralize all the relevant information on drug abuse control activities.
 3. A Regional Training Center may be established in the ECO region to provide training to the key personnel involved in demand reduction activities.
 4. Exchange programmes may be developed with the participation of trainers and trainees specializing in the field of demand reduction in the ECO member states.
 5. Organize periodical expert level meetings in order to assess, analyze and evaluate the ongoing, activities on Demand reduction and to facilitate the preparation of future policies.