

Supply control

1-Global trends in Drug Production and Trafficking

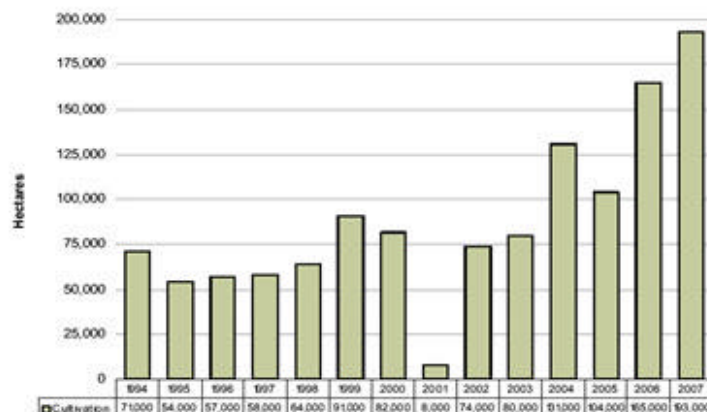
1-1- World Drug Production

According to the World Drug Report released by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the total area under opium cultivation rose to 235,700 ha in 2007. This increase of 17% from 2006 puts global cultivation at just about the same level, though still marginally lower, than the 238,000 ha recorded in 1998. Although there was some growth in South-East Asian poppy cultivation, the global increase was almost entirely due to the 17% expansion of cultivation in Afghanistan, which is now 193,000 ha. With Afghanistan accounting for 82% of world opium cultivation, the proportion of South-East Asian expansion in overall cultivation was small. It is not unimportant, however, as it reverses six straight years of decline. Opium poppy cultivation in Myanmar increased 29%, from 21,500 ha in 2006 to 27,700 ha, in 2007. Afghanistan's higher yielding opium poppy led to a second year of global opium production increases. Opium production almost doubled between 2005 and 2007, reaching 8,870 mt in 2007, a level unprecedented in recent years. In 2007, Afghanistan alone accounted for over 92% of global opium production. (UNODC, World Drug Report, 2008)

Coca cultivation increased in Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru in 2007. In Colombia, the area under cultivation expanded 27% to 99,000 ha. Increases for Bolivia and Peru were much smaller: 5% and 4% respectively. In total, coca cultivation increased 16% in 2007. Crops, however, were either not well tended or planted in poor yielding areas, as potential cocaine production only grew by 1% overall to 992 mt. Estimates of cannabis herb production show a slight decline for the second straight year in 2006, seeming to reverse the upward trend that began in the early 1990s. Global cannabis herb production is now estimated to be 41,400 mt, down from 42,000 mt in 2005 and 45,000 in 2004. Cannabis yields continue to vary considerably and extremely high yielding hydroponically grown cannabis continues to be a cause for concern. Global cannabis resin production estimates fell around 10% from 6,600 mt in 2005 to 6,000 mt in 2006 (midpoint estimates). Global annual prevalence remained almost unchanged going from 3.8% to 3.9% between 2005/06 and 2006/07. (Ibid)

ATS production has remained in the range of 450-500 mt since in 2000. In 2007 global ATS production increased slightly to 494 mt. There has been a decline in ecstasy production (from 113 mt in 2005 to 103 mt in 2006), and a decrease in methamphetamine production (from 278 mt to 267 mt) which is again compensated by an increase in global amphetamine production (from 88 mt to 126 mt). The global annual prevalence rate remained 0.6% for amphetamines and 0.2% for ecstasy. (Ibid)

Figure 1: Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan (ha), 1994-2007



1-2- Global trends in Drug Trafficking

Only seizures for cannabis herb and the opiates grew year on year in 2006. The quantity of cannabis herb seized grew 12% to 5,200 mt in 2005, while the quantity of resin seizures declined by roughly 25% - most likely still reflecting a decline in production in Morocco. Cannabis herb seizures, however, were 27% down compared to 2004 (their post-1998 peak). A significant decline in cannabis plants seized was recorded in 2006. Seizures of opium and morphine grew 10% and 31% respectively in 2006, reflecting continued production increases in Afghanistan. Heroin seizures, however, stabilized in 2006. Following five straight years of expansion, the quantity of cocaine seized fell by 5% in 2006. (Ibid)

This is consistent with the stabilization of overall cocaine production in the 2004 to 2006 period. The quantities of amphetamine, methamphetamine and ecstasy seized were all down between 8% and 15% from 2005 to 2006. Overall ATS seizures increased by 2% reflecting seizures of non specified ATS, including "captagon" tablets. (Ibid)

2- Entry of drugs into Iran and counter-measures

In the previous years, the volume of the seizure of drugs passing through Iran has had a considerable growth. Influenced by a 17% rise in drug cultivation and production in Afghanistan in 2007, the entry of drugs into Iran has experienced an ascending trend.



The rise in the seizure of different types of drugs except hashish and the rise in the number of arrested drug smugglers and dismantled rings in the previous year are indicative of the intensification of measures by the Islamic Republic of Iran in fighting drug trafficking.

The following items indicate changing trends from 2007 to 2008:

- Heroin seizure increased from 13263 kilos to 19824 kilos (49% increase);
- Crack seizures increased from 430 kilos to 3305 kilos (669% increase);
- Opium seizure increased from 427217 kilos to 562059 kilos (32% increase);
- Ice seizure increased from 39 kilos to 150 kilos (285% increase);
- Other Drugs (as like as Grass) seizure increased from 6052 kilos to 20804 kilos (244% increase);

- Drugs Burnt in the course of operations increased from 7848 kilos to 11119 kilos (42% increase);
 - The number of arrested drug traffickers increased from 126236 persons to 231487 persons (83% increase);
 - The number of dismantled drug rings increased from 2349 rings to 2391 rings (2% increase);
 - 21000 kilos of precursors have been seized.
- Meanwhile the number of arrested drug abusers has decreased from 285152 persons to 12467 persons (96% decrease).

3-Major counter-measures

In the past several years, the rise in drug cultivation and production in Afghanistan has caused an increase in the number of operations and counter-measures. In the past year, effective measures have been carried out, the most important of which are as the following:

3-1- Establishing and equipping Rasoul-e-Akram base

Rasoul-e-Akram base became operational in 2006. The base seeks to act as a coordinating body in measures along the eastern borders particularly the province of Sistan & Baluchistan. More than 50000 forces are present at the base so as to pave the way for swift and effective operations against drug traffickers.



Counter Trafficking troops stationed at Rasoule-e-Akram base

3-2- Engineering and construction measures along the borderline

Engineering and construction activities include; construction of 826 kilometers of embankments, digging canals with the length of 717 kilometers, construction of New Jersey concrete walls (70.5 km), road construction and operations for mending roads (116 km), mending embankments and canals (359.5 km), blocking passageways (37 cases) and setting up barbed wire and fences (131.8 km).



Construction of concrete walls and barbed fences along Iran- Afghanistan border

3-3- Implementation of integrated border control plan I50

The plan that has been implemented based on an agreement reached between the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan seeks to strengthen border control management in common border points. Within this plan, the UNODC supports the aforementioned project technically, logistically and financially. Of course, the integrated border control agreement was reached in 2006. But practical measures were launched in 2007. In line with this, a mini-Dublin delegation traveled to Iran and obtained part of the credits required for the implementation of the plan.



Counter drug trafficking troops stationed along borderline

3-4- Establishment of Anti-Narcotics Department at the Customs Administration

Based on national drug countering law, all organizations that are members of the Drug Control Headquarters have been obliged to set up an anti-narcotics department. Due to follow-up measures by the Drug Control Headquarters and measures adopted by the Customs Administration, the anti-narcotics department became operational at the Customs Administration. This is an important measure due to the issue of precursors control and the conversion of opium to morphine and heroin in Afghanistan. The said department is tasked with a supervisory role, follow-up action and seizure of illicit consignments.

3-5- Dismantling of smuggling networks

As it was mentioned earlier, 2391 drug smuggling networks were dismantled in 2008. Some of these dismantled smuggling rings are as the following:

3-5-1- The international drug smuggling ring smuggling drugs from Pakistan to Iran and from Iran to Europe

Based on reliable information concerning activities by an international ring led by Mansour Ata'ee, Khosro Salmasi and Ramin Sadri who were involved in obtaining morphine consignment from Pakistan and their transfer to Qazvin and conversion of said substances at a dairy farm, the members of the anti-narcotics force conducted surveillance measures and managed to identify a number of Bulgarian lorries that entered the dairy farm for the transfer of drugs. The required information including the license plate numbers of the said trucks were passed on to the Turkish police via the Islamic Republic of Iran's drug liaison officer stationed in Turkey. The Turkish police managed to seize 109 kilos of heroin from the identified Bulgarian Lorries on March 31 & April 1, 2008. Prior to this, the Iranian police in an operation against this drug smuggling ring managed to seize 529 kilos of morphine, 232 kilos of heroin, 732 kilos of opium, three Kalashnikov rifles and two colt hand guns. It is to be noted that the phone numbers that were revealed following the operation were immediately passed on to the Turkish police.

3-5-2- Identification of an international ring involved in smuggling of drugs to Arab states of the Persian Gulf region

Following intelligence exchange between the police forces of Iran and Saudi Arabia and intelligence and technical cooperation, the officials of Saudi Arabia and Yemen were informed about the geographical and maritime position of a vessel. Unfortunately, the vessels that carried narcotic drugs managed to flee from the scene. But in a separate operation based on intelligence offered to Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Yemen by the Islamic Republic of Iran's drug liaison officer based in Pakistan, managed to seize 20 kilos of hashish and later seized 1700 kilos of hashish carried by a vessel.

Following the said operations, the Iranian police managed to arrest a drug trafficker named Ahmad Shalibar and five other accomplices and as a result two Arab hostages named Seif Taleb (Yemeni citizen) and Moshaf Farhan Samari (Saudi citizen) were released.



2057 kg of drugs seized in the course of an operation

3-5-3- Dismantling of an international ring involved in smuggling of drugs to European countries

Following the interception of an Iranian truck in Turkey and the seizure of 136 kilos of heroin, surveillance efforts were immediately launched in Iran. Relevant phone numbers were exchanged between Iranian and Turkish police. Finally, on September 9, 2008 the main elements of the drug smuggling ring were arrested and 40 kilos of heroin and a hand gun were seized. In continuation of the said operation, names and foreign phone numbers related to the drug smuggling ring were revealed and the relevant information were given to Turkish officials via the Iranian DLO based in Turkey.



Burning of seized narcotics

3-6- Launching of the National Drug Control System (NDS) at the Health Ministry

NDS is a computerized system which facilitates the daily management of illicit movements, production, distribution and consumption as well as international trade in all controlled substances in both raw material form as well as in the form of pharmaceutical preparations.

Prior to the application of the said software at the Health Ministry's department for supervising medicine and drugs, all reports related to drugs under control were prepared manually and submitted to INCB. With the application of this software, all the required data are immediately reported to INCB using the online system.

3-7- Visit by ambassadors to the border areas

A number of ambassadors, the INCB secretary and the UNODC representative in Tehran along with 21 domestic and foreign journalists visited the eastern border areas on November 29, 2008 in order to make other countries familiar with the anti-drug efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The delegation initially visited Rasoul-e-Akram base in the city of Zahedan and held talks with relevant authorities. Later, they visited an exhibition and Tasuki border point and learned about different activities by the Iranian forces in the fields of operation, intelligence, engineering, equipment, etc.



Mini Dublin ambassadors visiting Iran -Afghanistan border

3-8- Launching of the "Regional Information Exchange Center"

One of the most important solutions for a joint and coordinated move against drug smuggling networks is the stationing of drug liaison officers. In line with this, the Islamic Republic of Iran has stationed DLOs in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkey. These countries as well as a number of other neighboring countries such as Saudi Arabia have adopted measures for dispatching DLOs to Iran.



In order to assist the DLOs in fulfilling their duties, it is necessary to create mechanisms for facilitating the exchange of intelligence among the DLOs. For this reason, the Islamic Republic of Iran last year set up the regional information exchange center. The center was visited by the UNODC representative and the ambassador of Afghanistan in Iran on December 31, 2008. The center will be used for exchange of information after the stationing of the DLOs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. In addition to this, the center can act as a bridge for the exchange of information with other regional and trans-regional countries.

3-9- Approval of the law on money-laundering

With regard to the sensitivity of the issue of money-laundering, the law for countering money-laundering was approved by the Iranian parliament (Islamic Consultative Assembly) on January 21, 2009 and was submitted for implementation. Based on this law, the supreme council for countering money-laundering will be established. The Commerce Minister, the Interior Minister, Minister of Information, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, and the Governor of Central Bank will be the members of the said council. A special committee has also been set up for enforcing the said law. Among the measures adopted in this regard one can make reference to the formation of four working groups including the working group for designing the structure and secretariat of the council, the working group for setting up the Financial Information Unit (FIU), the working group for international affairs and the working group for legal affairs. In the meantime, a two-day training seminar was held in May 2008 in cooperation with an accredited British company focusing on the issue of countering money-laundering and sources of financial support for terrorism. In addition to this, the Islamic Republic of Iran has had close cooperation with the Financial Action Task Force on Money-Laundering (FATF) and has adopted measures in conformity with international agreements and regulations.

3-10- The DLO project

The issue of up-to-date and timely communication and interaction among border guards of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan was taken into consideration and it was decided to designate certain points along the border line or marginal areas in line with trilateral agreements and the integrated border control management plan. In this way, the representatives of the border guard or the anti-narcotics police of the three countries will be stationed at the designated points and it will technically and practically become feasible for them to engage in immediate and timely exchange of news and information if necessary. Dogharoon region in Khorassan Razavi province was designated as one of the sensitive and important points for such interaction in Iran. The project is being followed up by Iran.

4- Precursor control

The Islamic Republic of Iran in order to control the illegal production of dangerous drugs in Afghanistan and by practicing control over customs and transit routes leading to that country has carried out a variety of measures aimed at preventing drug entry (lists included in the 1987 Convention). The Islamic Republic of Iran by joining TARCET Operation has boosted its activities. In the meantime, by making use of supervisory mechanisms and establishment of the national supervisory committee on precursors, the Islamic Republic of Iran has managed to control the trade in the production and industrial sectors in different industries.

In order to further comply with the law in measures aimed at preventing the smuggling of precursors, the Headquarters prepared and submitted to relevant organizations a procedure related to controlling precursors' trade. In order to make this procedure operational, the national committee for overseeing precursors and all processes related to precursors' imports, exports, production, consumption ,etc was established. In line with this, in 2008 in the course of two operations more than 21,000 tons of illicit precursors and chemical substances were seized in Bandar Abbas and the relevant international bodies were immediately informed.

5- Losses

In its efforts for countering illicit drugs and precursor control, the Islamic Republic of Iran has sustained major life and property losses the most important of which are as the following:

- 3600 martyrs and 11000 disabled;
- Allocation of more than 600 million dollars for blocking the eastern borders of the country and implementing technical and engineering measures for blocking the entry of drugs. With respect to the exacerbating situation of drug production in Afghanistan further allocation of budget is required in future
- Due to the prevailing situation in the border areas and nearby zones, the necessity for constant holding of exercises by the Police force and the massive presence of Police and security forces in these areas, the normal life of the inhabitants has become impossible. For this reason, the people there have sustained heavy losses during the past years. In order to make up for such losses and prevent people from engaging in illegal actions such as smuggling, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has so far allocated considerable budgets for sustaining the livelihood of these people.



3600 martyred and 11000 disabled during the long war with the drug traffickers

6- Confiscation of seized assets

In virtue of article 28 of the Anti-Narcotics Act of the Islamic Republic of Iran, any property earned through smuggling and the assets of escaped offenders subject to this act, if there is enough evidence, shall be confiscated in favor of Government. Based on the same article, any vehicle which is seized after armed clash with illicit drug traffickers shall be confiscated in favor of the operating agency.

Article 29 of the Anti-Narcotics Act also reiterates that the fines and other funds received through the enforcement of this act shall be imbued into a centralized account that will be opened with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance. In order to fulfill the goals set by the national plan for the campaign against narcotic drugs, the Government includes the required credits for the implementation of programs approved by the Headquarters within the country's annual budget.



Smugglers vehicles confiscated by the government

In line with this, the Islamic Republic of Iran's Drug Control Headquarters has set up a committee for identifying drug traffickers' properties and assets and has submitted the relevant by-law and procedure to relevant bodies for implementation.

Based on the existing records, from 2005 till the end of 2008, nearly 150 billion Rials have been gained by selling the confiscated properties and later deposited at the treasury for strengthening the Government in its campaign against illicit drugs. In the meantime, 2824 light and heavy vehicles that carried narcotics have been confiscated in favor of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran within the same period of time. These vehicles have been handed over to law enforcement units and other organizations involved in the fight against illicit drugs.



Houses earned through smuggling confiscated by the government

7- Requirements and obligations

- With respect to rising consumption of drugs such as heroin and compact heroin in most regional countries such as Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey and Central Asian states, these drugs must be given top priority in the campaign against illicit drugs;
- While taking into account the said priority, one should bear in mind that it is not feasible to produce semi-synthetic drugs without precursors. Hence, Afghanistan and its neighboring states must attach special significance to the need for controlling precursors.
- Major portion of the compact heroin is produced in Afghanistan. Hence, it is necessary for the government of Afghanistan and the multi-national forces stationed in that country to constantly identify labs that produce the said drug and carry out measures for dealing blows to these labs.
- One of the major necessities is the obtaining of the required equipment and technical needs of the border guard and the anti-narcotics police.