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NEWS BULLETIN ON PAST EVENTS IN THE COUNTER-NARCOTICS SPHERE (based on mass media reports)

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CARICC MEMBER STATES

REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN



DRAFT LAW: POSSESSION OF LESS THAN A LARGE AMOUNT OF DRUGS IN KAZAKHSTAN WILL BE DECRIMINALISED

Users of small doses of drugs in Kazakhstan will not be prosecuted, said Nurtay Abilmazhinov, deputy head of the Department for Countering Drug-Related Crime of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

"All operative staff of our special units will be focused on identifying large drug traffickers, suppressing OCGs and stemming drug supply channels, especially synthetic drugs, to the country's territory," Nurtay Abilmazhinov said at a briefing in the JCC.

He explained that a bill was under consideration in the Majilis to decriminalize two criminal offences and redirect them into administrative law. These are sections 1 and 2 of article 296 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan ("Non-medical use of drugs in public places" and "Illegal manufacturing, processing, purchase and storage, transportation without no purpose of sale").

"Large amount is 1 kilogram of marijuana and 1 gram of heroin. Such amounts of drugs (smaller than the larger ones) do not represent a significant public danger, but at the same time decriminalization will free up necessary forces and means of special units to solve more serious problems. Those who use them are basically sick people. They will not be involved in the orbit of criminal law. They do not pose a great danger," explained the policeman.

A special unit was created in the central apparatus of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It will deal with drug security issues. There will be high-tech specialists working there. The U.S. Embassy helped establish this unit.

"We will search for IP addresses of website administrators or those who access or sell drugs. This is the Office of Drug Security in the information and communication system. I can't say the number of staff. The minister's order is already in place, and now we have begun to equip. Three people were interviewed," said Nurtai Abilmazhitov.

In Kazakhstan, synthetic drugs are increasingly being detected and sold through websites. In 2017, 430 drug sites were blocked, and in 2018 that number reached more than 5,000. In January-April 2019, 3,500 such resources were identified, and the same amount of graphic advertising was erased from the walls of buildings. For these inscriptions 20 people were brought to administrative responsibility for violation of landscaping regulations and hooliganism.

"We suggest that "artists" who put graffiti, inscriptions, QR codes should be subject not to administrative liability, but to criminal liability. There is advertising and propaganda of

drugs. There should be criminal responsibility for this. This proposal is coordinated with all law enforcement agencies. In the future the proposal will go as a legislative initiative", - concluded the deputy head of the department.

<https://informburo.kz/novosti/zakonoproekt-za-hranenie-menee-gramma-geroina-i-menee-kilo-marihuany-budut-tolko-shtrafovat.html>



MEETING WITH US STATE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE

Acting Rector of the Academy, Maralbek Yeshimov, met with Erin Sawyer, Director of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) at the Law Enforcement Academy.

Erin Sawyer leads INL drug prevention and interdiction programmes in the Eurasian region.

M. Yeshimov expressed satisfaction with the existing bilateral cooperation and interest of the American side in the work of the Academy. The U.S. Embassy in Kazakhstan is an important partner of the university, in close cooperation with which fruitful work was carried out, he stressed.

For her part, E. Sawyer thanked for the high level of cooperation in implementation of joint activities.

A constructive conversation and exchange of views on the prospects for further cooperation took place during the meeting.

In particular, the sides stressed the special urgency of uniting efforts in ensuring national and international security, combating financial crimes, drug-related crime, human trafficking, terrorism and cybersecurity.

One of the most important areas of joint work is cooperation in the context of improving qualifications of law enforcement officers in Kazakhstan, organization of study tours and training sessions on topical issues in combating transnational crime.

An agreement was also reached on establishment of a cybercrime centre on the basis of the Regional Hub.

The parties expressed high interest in further development and strengthening the partnership.

<https://academy-gp.kz/?p=3888&lang=ru>

OTHER COUNTRIES

AFGHANISTAN



UN: DRUG TRAFFICKING SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN IS FAR FROM IMPROVING

According to the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), illicit opium economy in Afghanistan exceeded the amount of licit national exports in 2017.

Drug trafficking in Afghanistan is far from improving, said Yuri Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

According to him, the area under cultivation has decreased this year compared to the previous year, and potential opium and heroin production has also decreased, but this was mainly due to the drought that hit Afghanistan and had a negative impact on all crops, including opium poppy cultivation.

"Afghanistan remains the world's most important producer of opiates, opium, heroin, and opium, at around 90 per cent, and it is a serious problem faced by the international community. Our office, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, assists states, including those in the region directly adjacent to Afghanistan, I am referring to Central Asia - Kazakhstan, Iran, Pakistan - in countering illicit trafficking in drugs produced in Afghanistan," Fedotov said.

International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) claims that illicit opium economy in Afghanistan exceeded its total licit national exports in 2017. INCB has called upon the international community to assist Afghanistan in its fight against drug trafficking.

<https://tj.sputniknews.ru/world/20190526/1028993929/OON-situatsiya-oborot-narkotikov-Afganistan-daleka-ot-uluchsheniya.html>

BELARUS



MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION SIGNED WITH DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION OF DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OF THE UNITED STATES IN MINSK

On 21 May 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus hosted the signature ceremony of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Investigation Committee of the Republic of Belarus and the Drug Enforcement Administration of the US Department of Justice.

On the Belarusian side the document was signed by First Deputy Chairman of the Investigation Committee Mr. Aleksei Volkov. On behalf of the DEA the memorandum was signed by Regional Director Mr. William Warren Jr.

The signature ceremony was also attended by Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Belarus Mr. Evgeny Shestakov, US Charge d'Affaires a.i. in the Republic of Belarus Ms. Jennifer Moore, representatives of involved Belarusian government agencies, the US Embassy, the Drug Enforcement Administration in Moscow, and the media.

It should be noted that cooperation of the Investigation Committee with the Drug Enforcement Administration is constructive and aimed at achieving practical results.

Earlier, the Investigative Committee held working meetings with management of the Agency's Moscow Office to discuss promising areas of cooperation in the field of counter-narcotics as well as possibility of participation of Belarusian investigators in various events supported by the Administration.

As a follow-up to the agreements reached, in 2018 and 2019 personnel of the Investigative Committee participated in seminars on the above-mentioned issues organized by the Administration in the Russian Federation as well as in the International Conference of Law Enforcement Agencies on Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking held in Baku.

In the signed memorandum the parties consolidated their mutual desire for further development of cooperation in such areas as exchange of work experience and various information, mutual information on changes in national legislation and investigative practices, organization of working meetings and consultations on topical issues, holding various joint activities aimed at improving professionalism of investigators.

Signature of this document will contribute to expansion of contacts with the US side in the fight against illicit drug trafficking, strengthening business ties with US law enforcement agencies

<https://sk.gov.by/ru/news-ru/view/v-minske-podpisan-memorandum-o-sotrudnichestve-s-agentstvom-po-borbe-s-narkotikami-ministerstva-justitsii-ssha-8013/>

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