

Afghan Drug Production Against the Right to Development

*Speech by Director of the Russian FDSC Victor Ivanov
At the plenary meeting of the 56th Session of the CND UN
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**Dear Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I feel forced to begin my speech at this respected forum with expressing my regret about the doubtless fact that within the past year the global community has been unable not only to overcome the drug production and drug trafficking situation, but also to elaborate a plausible strategy for the victory of the anti-drug forces.

Thus, areas occupied by opium poppy in Afghanistan grew 18% last year, from 131 thousand hectares to 154 thousand. It was only due to a fungus epidemic and unfavourable weather conditions that the crops didn't reach a record level. However, this kind of seasonal fluctuations should not cover up the continuous victorious growth of heroin production in Afghanistan.

I would like to call your attention to the fact that the UN political process of anti-drug activity marked the imperatives for reducing drug plantations and production already twice – in 1998 and 2009, but these decisions were never carried out.

SLIDE 1

On the contrary, the presented slide very well illustrates the growth of cocaine and heroin consumption in the world. We have to admit that the United Nations have been unable to protect their people, particularly, the young ones.

SLIDE 2

Furthermore. The following slide clearly shows that the volume and scope of drug production not only haven't decreased since 1998, but have been directly contrary to our declarations.

I am convinced that none of the participants of the current CND session wants to see lack of positive progress in 2018, the year of another decade since the adoption of the "Political Declaration and Action Plan for International Cooperation".

Especially painful is the situation in Afghanistan, which still produces up to 90% of the world's heroin.

Within the years of the third millennium and since the beginning of the "Enduring Freedom" operation in 2001 Afghan heroin has killed over a million people; moreover, above a trillion of heroin dollars has been invested into transnational organized crime.

The withdrawal of the majority of international forces from Afghanistan in 2014 as well as the renunciation of the global community's responsibility for Afghan security issues will not be able to change dramatically the catastrophic situation with drug production.

Trafficking Afghan heroin affects almost 100 countries, which are UN member-states on all continents.

This means that the 154 thousand hectares of opium poppy in Afghanistan are a source of major damage for the 10 billion hectares of the territories of the abovementioned countries and their population.

At the same time most anti-drug programmes are focused not on the minor territories of drug production, but on the colossal areas of drug trafficking, including practically half of the world.

Obviously, in the case of concentration of efforts on the drug production territories, the efficiency, purely arithmetically calculating, will be 600 thousand times higher.

SLIDE № 3

We are witnessing a phenomenon of concentration in the two hemispheres of two super-powerful planetary drug production centres (over 90% of heroin in one small Afghanistan and 100% of cocaine in South America). These are two centres of sustainable emission, a kind of Central Banks for the criminal world, are institutionally incorporated into the trafficking and distribution system, as well as into the legal global finance and banking sector, which is more dangerous still.

Analyzing the power of these two planetary centres allows to evaluate the targeted investments made within the last 15 years into global organized crime, which is threatening the world and its security in every possible way, such as piracy, terrorism and extremism, violence, kidnapping, and brings about the aggregate figure of around 3 trillion dollars.

In order to overcome this negative trend of the last 15 years, since the 1998 Declaration, we need a new philosophy and paradigm for social development, which should be founded on implementing the basic UN right – **the right to development.**

Dear Colleagues,

Recently the new paradigm has been persistently presented to us as the idea of legalizing drugs, which speculated on the inefficiency of anti-drug policy.

However, it's a total illusion. The experience of free sales of opium in China in the 19th century by the British East India Company was a clear illustration of a rapid extinction of a whole nation.

In our opinion an efficient paradigm should be based on an in-depth understanding of the reasons for and peculiarities of the drug problem.

Analyzing drug production in the two global centres as well as the specificities of transcontinental heroin and cocaine trafficking clearly highlights the dominant factor, a kind of a system integrator for the drug problem – social and economic depression in producing and trafficking countries, which has driven considerable segments of society to act as population base involved in drug production and trafficking.

SLIDE 4

Research shows a lethal influence of depression on individuals, as well as on whole regions.

An illustrative situation is the one with poor dehkans in Afghanistan, who have to work on opium poppy fields for meager wages bringing astronomical profits to the landlords and sheer pleasure to certain financial and banking institutions.

We can see a similar situation in the streets of European megalopolises, where the consumers of the products of Afghan dehkans are forming the same depressed social base.

Thus, maintaining and cultivating such depressive areas is a political and economic basis for continuous drug production and for the existence the drug mafia itself.

Within this context purely police measures **nigther in Afghanistan nor in Colombia** are definitely insufficient.

I'll comment on that.

We regularly destroy drug laboratories and tonnes of narcotics in Afghanistan itself. However, there are no radical changes. And it is not surprising because the social basis for drug production has not been eliminated, on the contrary it is being increasingly reproduced.

Last year's 18% growth of opium poppy areas in Afghanistan virtually means an equal growth in the number of peasant households involved in drug production.

In other words, this degradation is going on, and the social basis for drug production is growing.

It is obvious that the way to put an end to drug production is Afghanistan's alternative development by fulfilling the right of individuals and the whole nation to develop, which should become a priority of the anti-drug policy and the essence of the new paradigm.

At a conference in Lima last may we suggested making a special focus precisely on fulfilling the right to development as well as to alternative development.

Last November in Lima this idea was supported at a high-ranking expert conference.

We are pleased to note that Russia's initiatives were taken into consideration by those important forums and included into the resolutions of the current CND session.

We are particularly glad to express our sincere admiration and gratitude to Peru, whose representative is chairing today's CND session.

Peru, jointly with Columbia and Thailand, has proposed a draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly "UN Guidelines for Alternative Development", fully taking into account our proposals presented also in my speech at the last CND session.

In view of the above it is critically important for eliminating the social and economic reasons for drug production to make full use of the total potential of such a unique mechanism as the UN's Economic and Social Council.

I would like to remind you that the competence of ECOSOC includes considering international economic and social problems, and the Council itself is set up as the central forum for discussing such issues and elaborating political recommendations.

Dear Colleagues,

In view of the above I propose to include the following into the resolution of our session:

Firstly, for the purpose of solving the abovementioned problem we suggest on the threshold of 2015 that the General Assembly should vest the ECOSOC with a new function of Intensified Alternative Development of Afghanistan, which jointly with the Forum of ECOSOC for Cooperation Towards Development and the Commission for Peacebuilding could organize the country's intensive post-conflict rising and developing, possibly, by way

of creating a new special ECOSOC mechanism in the form of a Special Consulting Group for Afghan Development.

Secondly, we find it expedient to plan within the next year's UN General Assembly holding a Global Anti-Drug Summit, whose resolutions could be secured by the UN Security Council.

Thirdly, I propose to include these issues into this July's ECOSOC session.

Thank you for your attention.