



Cities in the Balkan region Against Drugs



Photo from bulgaria-italia.com

For two days, June 26-27, 2003, the city of Bourgas, Bulgaria, became a centre for discussion on illicit drugs in the Balkan region. This city hosted the second international conference for the Balkan members of ECAD. 92 delegates from 16 cities in Bulgaria, Germany, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro took part in the event.

The participants were greeted by Mayor of Bourgas Mr Joan Kostadinov and the District

Governor Mr John Vitanov. George Zazulin, director of the ECAD office in Russia, was invited as a guest speaker to the conference.

The conference resulted in a Declaration, in which a wish to establish a network of Balkan cities has been confirmed. This network is aimed to further co-operation and experience exchange in the field of anti-drug work.

ECAD regards the establishing of such a network as an important step towards a healthier and safer city environment, considering the role of the Balkans in the fight against illicit production, trafficking and use of narcotic substances.

The III International Conference "Cities of the Balkan region Against Drugs" will take place in Podgorica, Montenegro, 2004.

32 cities in the Balkans are now members of ECAD.

ECAD Summer 2003

Report for the period May-September 2003

May

The ECAD 10th Anniversary Mayors' Conference, May 15-17, must be considered as an overall success! The feedback from the host city, guests and speakers has been unanimously positive. The Head office in Stockholm has received a number of letters and phone calls with appreciative remarks.

The rest of May was mainly devoted to closing up the conference accounts, publishing a special edition of the newsletter and putting in place the conference documentation at the www.ecad.net website.

June

Tomas Hallberg was invited as a keynote speaker to a conference at the University of Jerusalem by the Anti-Drug Authority of Israel. The conference program was intense with a variety of study visits which gave many opportunities to expound on European drug policies and present the work of ECAD.

★ ECAD CONFERENCE

Declaration

From International Conference

*"Cities of the Balkan Region Against Drugs"
Bourgas, June 26-27, 2003*

We, representatives of the cities in the Balkan region, participants of the International ECAD Conference,

Confirm our wish to establish a network of Balkan cities to join our efforts in the fight against illicit use and trafficking of narcotic substances.

Taking into consideration the importance of this problem on the global scale and the role of the Balkan countries in combating trafficking of narcotic substances, their legalisation and use,

In accordance with the Tessoniki Memorandum 2000 between the Mayors of the Balkan cities,

Declare that we will participate in co-operation that is aimed to:

- Develop common strategies to limit illicit circulation of narcotic substances;
- Develop and implement preventive programs;
- Counteract legalisation of narcotic substances in our cities;
- Intensify formal and informal contacts between institutions, organisations and citizens by increased co-operation, mutual assistance, experience exchange for common actions in order to effectively combat use and trafficking of narcotic substances.

★ ECAD NEWS

On June 26-27, George Zazulin, ECAD regional director in Russia, had the honour to present the ECAD main organisation at the second regional conference for ECAD members in the Balkans that took place in Bourgas, Bulgaria. One of the results of the conference is reflected in a Declaration, in which the Balkan members of ECAD confirm their wish to join their efforts in combating illicit drugs by establishing an anti-drug network.

On the same days, but in Belarus, ECAD has used the occasion of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking to establish closer contacts with Belarusian organisations, active in the anti-drug fieldwork.

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Youth in Jerusalem

ECAD Summer 2003

From Page 1

This country, situated in the very middle of Europe, is now facing a growing drug problem. Many East European countries have become transit countries for illicit drug trafficking, which concerns Belarus as well. Though the situation in this country is still at a level where an input can have big and lasting results. Based on our experience in the Belarus neighbouring country of Lithuania, ECAD is planning to carry out a drug prevention program in Belarus in 2004.

July

The Swedish city of Borås became a member of ECAD on July 3rd. This happened in connection with an outdoor concert in the city centre. The concert attracted an audience of some 10,000 in a city with 100,000 inhabitants. Tomas Hallberg had the pleasure to address this audience together with Maj Steen, Mayor of Borås and the chairman of the Swedish ECAD network, Mats Ericson.

A summer camp was arranged on July 8-16 in Lithuania in co-operation with C.R.I.S. (Criminals' Return Into Society), IOGT/NTO and the Lithuanian counterparts in Visagina. ECAD was represented by Saulius Chaplinskis, Advisory Board member, and Åke Setréus. Close to 150 camp guests listened to,

among other speakers, in between sports and games, the Lithuanian Minister for Health.

August

Tomas Hallberg and Torgny Peterson took part in a sister-city conference in Visby on the Swedish island of Gotland. There were representatives from the sister-cities in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. One half of the two-day conference has been devoted to drug issues. Besides listening to speakers, the participants have also visited the Hassela Treatment community.

September

Under the auspices of ECAD and the Russian State University at St. Petersburg, a two-year program on conflict studies in the field of anti-drug work will start in September 2003. This program is aimed at those who work with political programs in regard to drug policies at municipal, regional or higher political levels. A Swedish private sponsor is willing to financially support this educational program.

After this productive summer we are proceeding into autumn with all the sails up!

Israeli anti-drug policy set aside

Drug issues in Israel have a tendency to land up at the bottom of priorities. Israel's restrictive anti-drug policy that the country has had for many years is now beginning to weaken. It was the impression ECAD director Tomas Hallberg got in June, after visiting Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem.

Mr Hallberg was invited as a speaker to a conference at the Jerusalem university by the Anti-Drug Authority of Israel. The conference gave opportunities to meet different individuals within the Israeli drug-political scene.



Hank Righter and a young drug liberal

According to the numbers presented by authorities, there are around 25,000 drug users in Israel, a country with a population of 7 million. About 80 per cent of all convicts in Israeli prisons are condemned for drug-related crimes. The drug use rate among youngsters has significantly increased during last 6-7 years. A special area of concern is the drug misuse within the Russian immigrant population. During the last 10 years nearly one million immigrants have arrived from countries of the former Soviet Union. Many of them have used narcotic substances before they came to Israel. Most misusers started to do drugs after their arrival to Israel.

A tolerant attitude towards drug use could be noticed at this conference. Some young people with a cannabis-leaf on their t-shirts talked in favour of legalisation of cannabis in between the sessions. They congratulated the speaker from the Netherlands, Hank Righter, for his liberalism. On the question if they had ever have met any opposition they answered that they did not have any problems of this kind. "Everybody in this country is busy with security questions and has no time for us".

★ HAS YOUR CITY JOINED ECAD?



Two Swedish cities, Borås and Timrå, joined ECAD during summer.

Welcome!

Borås (100,000 citizens)



Timrå (20,000 citizens)

The Netherlands makes cannabis a prescription drug

A Dutch health official stated on Sunday that the Netherlands will this week become the world's first country to make cannabis available as a prescription drug in 1650 pharmacies to treat chronically ill patients.

Two companies in the Netherlands have been given licences to grow special strains of cannabis in laboratory-style conditions to sell to the Health Ministry, which in turn packages and labels the drug in small tubs to supply to pharmacies.

The Health Ministry 'recommends' patients to dilute the cannabis in tea or turn it into a spray in a nebuliser.

As well as pharmacies, 80 hospitals and 400 doctors will be allowed to dispense five

gram doses of SIMM 18 medical marijuana for 44 euros a tub and more potent Bedrocan at 50 euros.

The government will start distributing to pharmacies on Monday with a monopoly over wholesale of the drug.

Critics argue that it has not passed sufficient scientific scrutiny at a time when researchers are trying to determine if it confers the medical benefits many users claim. A majority of doctors recognise the increase in the risk of depression and schizophrenia.

The Netherlands, where prostitution and the sale of cannabis in coffee shops are regulated by the government, has a history of such deteriorative 'monopolies.'

Illegal market for Buprenorphine on the rise

In Sweden abuse of the legal drug Buprenorphine, also known as Subutex, is increasing. In Stockholm the drug is now almost as popular as the most commonly abused drug Rohypnol and has also almost surpassed heroin. The Swedish government now calls for tighter rules for the prescription of the substance.

Buprenorphine was first prescribed legally in Sweden in 1999. It is used to wean heroin addicts off their drug of choice. But the legal drug also produces a "high", at a lesser level but similar to that of heroin. In Sweden the drug has become a low-budget replacement for heroin on the black market.

Prescriptions of Methadone, a similar drug to Buprenorphine, are heavily regulated.

Methadone may only be administered to carefully chosen patients while they're undergoing psychological and social rehabilitation. The more recent drug Buprenorphine is not subject to any such regulations. Up to date any doctor may prescribe it to any person. The Narcotics Police in Stockholm say they are appalled by how easily addicts get hold of the drug.

Sweden's Board of Public Health has now turned to the government to have the regulations of all drugs similar to Buprenorphine and Methadone harmonised. The Social Ministry says it is in favour of new regulations but the changes will probably include changing laws, something which will make the process slow.

UN, Afghanistan launch Drugs Interdiction Unit

The United Nations *Office on Drugs and Crime* (UNODC) has just added another project to fight narcotics to its largely expanded portfolio of 20 projects - worth US\$38 million - in the fight against illicit drugs in Afghanistan. Antonio Maria Costa, UNODC Executive Director, and Ali Ahmad Jalali, the Afghan Minister of Interior, signed an agreement in Kabul on August, 25 to help establish a new drug interdiction department within the Ministry.

"This is only the latest step in continuous efforts to assist Afghanistan in creating con-

ditions for effective drug control. Major progress has been made recently with the creation of a new Counter-Narcotics Directorate (CND) and the adoption of a National Drug Control Strategy. Now we need to increase international assistance to help the country strengthen its capacity to enforce the law and help Afghan farmers to develop a sustainable alternative livelihood," Mr. Costa said following the signing of the agreement.

By UN Information Service

\$8 million dollars in 3 years helps save 13 lives

Australia: Reigning the debate on the facility's life-saving value, the NSW State Government announced on September 1st that the Kings Cross heroin injecting room trial will be extended for four years.

The NSW Special Minister of State, John Della Bosca, said the Government would introduce laws in this parliamentary session to continue the trial until 2007.

Mr Della Bosca welcomed the report's findings but said there had not been enough referrals to rehabilitation services - only one in every 41 visits.

The announcement follows the release in July of a report that found 554 drug overdoses had been treated without a fatality and there had been no increase in drug-related crime in the area since the centre opened in May 2001. The report found 13 deaths had been prevented.

However Salvation Army's Major Brian Watters, chairman of the Australian National Council on Drugs and a long-time opponent of the injecting room, rightly stated that the cost of the program, which is currently running at a \$2.5 million annual cost would be better spent on rehabilitation services, where more deaths could be prevented.

ECAD NEWS

Mr Robison, Drug Free Australia executive director, stated, "The government and the injecting room are all about keeping people on drugs... (The centre) has failed on its own indicators. It should be closed, and that money should be put into rehabilitation."

HNN comment: It is astonishing that Mr Della Bosca can even think that a program with such a high rate of expenditure, can even be close to being considered for an extended trial. Over \$8 million dollars has been spent on an idea which is not actually designed to stop the harmful processes, rather, it is put in place - to facilitate drug use, abuse and addiction.

Imagine what kinds of detoxification, rehabilitation, educational and preventative programs could have been implemented with a budget of over \$8 million - the mind boggles...

SAMHSA's latest National Survey providing prevalence of substance use in the U.S.

SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health [formerly called the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA)] is the primary source of information on the prevalence, patterns, and consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use and abuse in the general U.S. civilian non institutionalised population, age 12 and older.

The following overview includes a summary of the key findings that are discussed in the full report.

Full report is available at www.samhsa.gov/oas/nhsda.htm

Illicit Drug Use: highlights

- In 2002, an estimated 19.5 million Americans, or 8.3 percent of the population aged 12 or older, were current illicit drug users. Current drug use means use of an illicit drug during the month prior to the survey interview.
- Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug, with a rate of 6.2 percent. Of the 14.6 million past month marijuana users in 2002, about one third, or 4.8 million persons, used it on 20 or more days in the past month.
- In 2002, an estimated 2.0 million persons (0.9 percent) were current cocaine users, 567,000 of whom used crack. Hallucinogens were used by 1.2 million persons, including

676,000 users of Ecstasy. There were an estimated 166,000 current heroin users.

- An estimated 6.2 million persons, or 2.6 percent of the population aged 12 or older, were current users of psychotherapeutic drugs taken non-medically. An estimated 4.4 million used pain relievers, 1.8 million used tranquilizers, 1.2 million used stimulants, and 0.4 million used sedatives.
- Among youths aged 12 to 17, 11.6 percent were current illicit drug users. The rate of use was highest among young adults (18 to 25 years) at 20.2 percent. Among adults aged 26 or older, 5.8 percent reported current illicit drug use.
- The rates of current illicit drug use were highest among American Indians/Alaska Natives (10.1 percent) and persons reporting two or more races (11.4 percent). Rates were 9.7 percent for blacks, 8.5 percent for whites, and 7.2 percent for Hispanics. Asians had the lowest rate at 3.5 percent.
- Among youths aged 12 to 17, the rate of current illicit drug use among American Indians/Alaska Natives (20.9 percent) was significantly higher than the rate among all youths (11.6 percent), and the rate among Asian youths (4.8 percent) was significantly lower compared with the overall rate for all youths.

Four million drug users in Russia

Russia: Speaking at the first general meeting of the State Committee to Control the Use of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances Chairman Viktor Cherkosov stated on September 9 that approximately 4 million Russians, or 3% of the country's population, take narcotic

drugs. Also over the past 10 years, the committee head stated that the annual rate of drug-related crime are up 15 times, incidents of drug dealing 80 times, and incidents of criminal drug organizations are up 9 times.

*Our European societies have experimented and evaluated both tolerance and intolerance to illicit drug use and drug abuse. It is our reflection upon this which guides us towards non-use. This in regard to our **citizens'** well being.*



ECAD is Europe's leading organisation promoting a drug free Europe and representing millions of European citizens. Drug dealing and drug abuse cause enormous problems in Europe. Nations and their citizens are affected by the consequences of drug abuse. ECAD member cities work to develop initiatives and efforts against drug abuse supporting the United Nations Conventions which oppose legalisation and promote policies to eradicate drug abuse worldwide. Has your city joined ECAD?

Global illicit drug trends 2003

First released in 1999, this report is now prepared annually by the Research Section of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), which is part of the Vienna-based United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The report takes a statistical approach to assessing the status of world supply in and demand for illicit drugs. Data and estimates are collected or prepared by Governments and UNDCP, as well as by other specialised agencies and international institutions

★ DRUG REPORTS

This year's report presents, *first*, an analysis of the main illicit markets for heroin, cocaine, cannabis and amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS); and *secondly* synthesises the main trends in illicit drug production, trafficking and consumption. The analysis of the main illicit markets focuses on the period between 1998 and 2003 since the international community is presently reviewing progress in achieving the targets set at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly (UNGASS) in 1998. The illicit drug production, trafficking and consumption trends focus on 2001/2002, updating last year's edition of the present publication.

From the report:

The evolution of the main illicit drug markets in recent years provides an uneven picture, depending on the drugs and the regions considered. Overall, the evolution of world heroin and cocaine markets shows some positive tendencies. The picture is confused for synthetic drugs and fairly negative for cannabis.

European Cities Against Drugs

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