

Combating International Crime

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International drug traffickers, transnational organized crime, terrorist groups, and lack of institutionalized rule of law threaten Americans at home, U.S. interests abroad, and our allies in every region of the world. No country, and no society, is

immune. Combating these threats is an essential component to other shared and equally important goals such as security, public health, economic development, and, in particular, the growth of legitimate democracy and respect for human rights.

Through the funding provided by the U.S. Congress to the State Department's Bureau for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), we carry out programs valued at more than \$2 billion, manage a diverse range of programs in more than 100 countries, and participate in regional and global initiatives aimed at combating illegal cultivation, trafficking, and abuse, especially through assistance to host-nation institutions. INL's programs also focus on enhancing the institutional capability of law enforcement officials and the criminal justice system in emerging democracies around the world, creating a system of partners in the fight against international organized crime.

Representing the bulk of foreign assistance housed in INL are two core programs, the multiple-year Andean Counter-Drug Initiative (ACI), and the policies and

programs with our international partners to turn back the illegal drug trade in Afghanistan and establish rule of law in both Afghanistan and Iraq. The issue of controlling precursor chemicals and amphetamine-type stimulants is the third important area addressed by INL, in response to the rapidly growing worldwide amphetamine-abuse problem. INL also gives attention to the issue of demand reduction, since this is a multifaceted problem.

Andean Counter-Drug Initiative

Virtually all of the world's cocaine, as well as most of the illegal heroin entering the United States, come from the Andean region of Latin America. ACI, a region-wide



U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jose Lopez Jr.

A Peruvian navy ship passes under the Bridge of the Americas in Panama as it prepares to participate in a multinational training exercise involving the United States, Central and South American countries, and Caribbean nations. The exercise is designed to train the multinational force in a variety of surface, air, and mine countermeasures, as well as the detection, monitoring, and interdiction of vessels.



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A tractor tears up a field planted with opium poppies, as workers and security guards stand by, in Nangarhar province, east of Kabul, Afghanistan, in March 2006. A U.S. antidrug official said that Afghan poppies would be sprayed with herbicide to combat an opium trade that produced a record heroin haul in 2006.

campaign to curb the production and trafficking of these drugs, focuses on Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil, Panama, and Venezuela. Complicating the fight against drugs is the symbiotic relationship between drug traffickers and international terrorist organizations, which have successfully gained control of territory within sovereign nations fighting to extend the rule of law. Despite these serious problems, progress has been pronounced.

To succeed, a careful balance of antinarcotics education, eradication of illicit drug crops, interdiction and law enforcement, prevention and treatment, as well as the development of alternative livelihoods for reformed coca farmers, is required. Experience indicates that programs in alternative livelihoods work best when combined with a robust eradication effort, both forced and voluntary. The United States has in recent years provided nearly \$280 million in alternative development assistance to Colombia alone, which produces 90 percent of the cocaine entering the United States. In the mid-1990s, Colombia was on the verge of collapse from a campaign of violence by drug cartels and terrorist groups, some of which were also involved in drug trafficking. Over the past few years, cocaine production has leveled off, political violence is down, public security has improved, and the Colombian economy has rebounded to the point that the World Bank recently termed it an attractive investment climate—a major turnaround.

The war is far from over, however. Although U.N. estimates indicate that Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia have

reduced their coca cultivation over the past five years, the Andean countries must work even harder to achieve permanent reductions in the region's illegal crops. Recent trends, especially in Bolivia, indicate that the success that has been achieved may be at risk. The United States opposes the Morales administration's effort to find so-called commercial uses for illegal coca, which contradicts Bolivia's commitments under key U.N. drug conventions. Our concern is that more coca leaf under cultivation means that more cocaine will inevitably be produced.

Confronting Afghan Opium Poppy/ Heroin Production

Afghanistan is the world's leading producer of illicit opiates, accounting for nearly 92 percent of the global supply and an export value estimated at \$3.1 billion in 2006, or nearly 50 percent of Afghanistan's GDP. The street value of heroin and opium is, of course, many times higher. The Afghan opium problem represents much more than just a drug problem for us and the region. As in Colombia, the cultivation, production, and trafficking of opiates is a destabilizing influence, but it is especially dangerous in an emerging democracy like Afghanistan, struggling for stability. Continued support to counter-narcotics efforts in Afghanistan is an essential component of overall U.S. and international policy in Afghanistan, directly connected to the success of the nation's economic development, rule of law, and democratic processes, and undercutting a resurgent Taliban that could foment regional instability.

In December of 2005, the Afghan government laid a legal foundation to combat illegal drugs by enacting the comprehensive Anti-Narcotics Law. The law criminalizes all forms of narcotics trafficking, plus many narcotics-related offenses such as money laundering, corruption, and violent offenses. It also gives a legal framework for the modern investigative and prosecutorial procedures necessary to fight narcotics trafficking in Afghanistan. Implementing this law requires an unprecedented collaboration of our international partners and the Afghan government to implement and refine a five-pillar strategy for combating narcotics. These include 1) effective public information dissemination, 2) alternative livelihoods to create economic alternatives to poppy cultivation, 3) law enforcement and justice reform to support Afghan efforts to arrest, prosecute, and punish convicted traffickers and officials who are found to be corrupt, 4) law enforcement



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Japanese coast guard policemen control narcotics traffickers on a boat during an exercise of the North Pacific Coast Guard Forum in Busan, South Korea, in June 2006. Participants in the exercise included members of the coast guards of South Korea, Japan, the United States, China, Canada, and Russia.

interdiction, and 5) poppy eradication, including discouraging plantings in the first place. The seriousness of Afghanistan's illegal opium poppy problem calls for a long-term commitment on the part of the entire international community.

Iraqi Rule of Law

Our Iraqi Criminal Justice Program supports the continuing development of police, prosecutorial, judicial, and correctional institutions in support of the rule of law and democratic governance in Iraq. In the fall of 2003, INL established a police training facility near Amman, Jordan, the Jordan International Police Training Center (JIPTC), using up to 60 trainers from 16 different countries. Since that time, the facility has

served as a primary venue for training for more than 15,600 police recruits. INL-funded trainers also played a key role in expanding training to a new Department of Defense-refurbished facility in Baghdad and 12 INL-constructed regional facilities that have trained more than 14,000 police. In addition to training new recruits, INL also provided transition and integration training for some 34,000 existing police, many of whose skills were outmoded or virtually nonexistent. An additional 12,000 police have also received advanced and specialized training. As part of needed follow-on field training, INL has positioned 500 police advisors and mentors in Iraq, but their ability to operate in the field has been limited by the security situation. In the justice sector, INL provided training for 175 judges and assisted in the reopening of the Iraq Central Criminal Court, which is



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Two Thai officials prepare packs of drugs for a destruction ceremony in central Thailand on June 26, 2006, the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, when Thai authorities destroyed about 3.5 tons of confiscated narcotics.

throughout the world, including the United States. This awareness prompted the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to launch its first-ever *U.S. Synthetic Drug Control Strategy*. In March 2006, INL worked with the U.N. Commission on Narcotic Drugs to have that body adopt a resolution designed to improve international monitoring of key precursor chemicals used in the production of synthetic drugs and help prevent their diversion for illicit use. That same month, Congress enacted the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act, which strengthens U.S. monitoring of the international flow, including major exporters and importers, of key precursor chemicals.

The relative ease of producing methamphetamine, along with the high profit margins it generates, make this debilitating drug especially attractive to criminal groups. INL is collaborating with many countries to help them control precursor chemicals needed to make these toxic drugs. We are working especially well with our immediate neighbors—Canada and Mexico—in this important area.

Demand Reduction

While most of the department's efforts focus on disrupting the supply of drugs, INL also works with foreign governments and private organizations to help

now processing cases involving terrorism. Finally, U.S. advisors have provided basic academy training for more than 2,000 Iraqi correctional officers and are providing on-the-job training in prisons throughout the country.

Chemical Drug Control

The United Nations and other reliable sources report that abuse of methamphetamine and similar toxic substances, such as Ecstasy, is a growing problem

them deal with the problem of domestic drug abuse, which has been growing rapidly countries that previously thought themselves largely immune to the lure of drugs. Such programs focus on the sharing of best practices, which are transmitted through extensive formal and informal networking among governments and NGOs, including several hundred Islamic organizations engaged in drug education, prevention, and treatment.

A Mutual Responsibility

The drug issue has been difficult to address, but the international community has made a difference. As examples, Thailand, Pakistan, and Laos are virtually opium poppy free; significant strides have been made against illegal cultivations in the Andes; seizures, arrests, and convictions against many of the biggest traffickers are on the rise; and all over the world young people have a better understanding of the perils of illegal drug use and are acting accordingly. The Andean Counter-Drug Initiative, narcotics control in Afghanistan, and our mutual efforts to combat methamphetamine-type drugs and related chemicals, remind us that we have developed a strong international consensus that the drug trade threatens all nations, and it is our mutual responsibility to counter drug cultivation, trafficking, and abuse. INL worked with Congress to sponsor Colombian drug control experts' travel to Kabul to meet Afghan counterparts to share their expertise. Information-sharing to help jump-start countries facing problems similar to those elsewhere in the world is an extremely important part of our overall effort.

As called for in the 2006 U.N. annual drug report, we must continue our international cooperation to significantly reduce the threat posed by international drug production, trafficking, and abuse. In this sense, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs plays an essential role. In the fight against international organized crime, we are also leading the way through policies and programs that make it easier for law enforcement officials to collaborate, share information, and disrupt international networks. And as we help train new police officers and criminal justice experts in Afghanistan and Iraq, we give the rule of law and democracy an opportunity to take root. ■

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