



MEDIA ADVISORY

Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia Against Illicit Drug Trafficking

Tbilisi, 3 February 2006 - Drug trafficking from Asia to Europe is being funnelled through the Southern Caucasus corridor. As small countries on the crossroads of trade routes linking Europe and Asia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia face an ever-present threat of illicit drug trafficking.

A regional anti-drug programme for the South Caucasus (SCAD) was launched by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with European Commission in 2001. It aimed at building the capacity of governments of the countries in the South Caucasus to interdict drug trafficking and drug abuse as well as fostering regional cooperation through joint training, adoption of common technical standards, database and control procedures.

SCAD is important for all South Caucasus Region (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) and for European countries as well. As a direct consequence of this growing trafficking situation, there is growing heroin abuse in the region along the trafficking roads. Drug abuse has dramatic health consequences for the population (HIV, TB, etc) and reduces the productivity of the individuals. Drug trafficking destabilises the economies and foster corruption. Every effort is being made by the authorities to address the problem but financial limitation, outdated procedures, lack of modern technologies and methods and lack of regional cooperation hinder effective drug prevention and interdiction measures.

A meeting of the Steering Committee of the Southern Caucasus Anti-Drug Programme will be held in Sheraton Metechi Palace Hotel in Tbilisi on 3 February 2006. The main objective of meeting is to discuss the progress of the SCAD Programme to date and work plan for the year 2006 with EC (donor) and national counterparts – high representatives from governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia

More effective anti-drug measures in the region would permit a reduction of drug trafficking towards Europe but more importantly it would also permit to reduce drug abuse and drug trafficking in Southern Caucasus itself which in turn should positively impact development perspectives.

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