

MAIN DIRECTIONS OF COMBATING DRUG SMUGGLING

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Abstract: *The article analyzes the problems associated with the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as the reasons for their occurrence and ways to solve them.*

Key words: *drug business, drug trafficking, precursors, transit, psychotropic substances, smuggling.*

Issues of ensuring the economic security of the state in modern conditions occupy one of the central directions of the foreign policy activities of our state. The consequences of customs offenses and crimes, as well as their sustainable development, pose a great danger to our state due to their impact on many aspects of the existence of society, both from the economic and social sides. In this regard, one of the main tasks assigned to the customs authorities is to suppress the smuggling of narcotic drugs, their analogues, and psychotropic substances.

Illegal drug trafficking is a problem not only of individual regions and countries, but also of the modern world as a whole. The spread of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances creates a real threat to public health, negatively affects the demographic situation, and contributes to a decline in cultural, moral and human values in society. Problems associated with drug trafficking are acute for all countries without exception and have a negative impact on their social, cultural, economic and political development.

In recent years, the fight in the field of drug trafficking has reached a new qualitative level. This is confirmed by the organization and creation of new units and services to combat illicit drug trafficking both within countries and at the international level. At the same time, as practice shows, the specifics of the mechanism of international drug trafficking are in constant dynamic modification, which, in turn, requires law enforcement agencies to review and rework previously proposed methods and recommendations.

The great danger of illegal drug supplies to the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan comes from organized criminal communities with great financial potential, which, through corrupt connections, transit through the Republic of Uzbekistan to European countries, since Afghanistan, as our neighbor, is one of the largest plantations for the cultivation of narcotic plants and their main supplier to Asia Minor and Europe.

Analysis of the situation in this area reveals several alarming trends. Firstly, one of the main sources of the drug threat in Central Asia remains the situation in Afghanistan, which accounts for more than 90% of world opium production. Despite the measures

taken in the Central Asian states to combat drug trafficking, transnational drug gangs are trying to use the territory of the countries of our region as a channel for drug trafficking along the so-called “Northern Route”. In his speech at the 78th session of the UN General Assembly, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan emphasized that: “International security is directly related to the processes in Afghanistan. A new situation has emerged in this country, which requires special approaches to resolving the Afghan issue.”[1]

Secondly, drug trafficking today is one of the main sources of financial support for extremist and terrorist structures, criminal groups, as well as one of the key elements of their transnational relationships. Proceeds from drug trafficking, according to experts, have become one of the main means for financing the recruitment and propaganda activities of international terrorist organizations in Central Asia, where they are trying to spread their influence. Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 330 “On improving the procedure for import, export and transit through the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors, as well as control over their circulation” is important, since it is in the appendices of this resolution that the dimensions for qualifying a criminal offense are determined acts in cases of their detection.[2] It must be emphasized that illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, their analogues, psychotropic substances means their import (export) into the Republic of Uzbekistan, transit, storage, release, sale, distribution, acquisition, transportation, shipment, development, production, manufacture, use, destruction , as well as the cultivation of drug-containing plants, committed in violation of the conditions and procedures established by the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan.[3].

It should be noted that not a single independent country in the world can develop without international cooperation. This is especially important for developing countries that are in the process of independent development. The Republic of Uzbekistan is a participant in many international organizations for cooperation in identifying and suppressing crimes in the field of customs. The main objective of cooperation within the above framework is to bring the quality of work of the customs service of our republic closer to the level of world standards, which suggests bringing its legal framework closer to international conventions and other international norms. An analysis of the interaction between the customs services of the CIS member countries in the law enforcement sphere indicates both a steady increase in various types of activities, the number of requests and operational and preventive measures, and the need to take coordinated actions and operational decisions, including to ensure departmental and international obligations. Within the United Nations system, UNODC has a significant comparative advantage to respond comprehensively to terrorism threats. In particular, this includes a wide range of knowledge in the areas of crime prevention and criminal justice, the rule of law, drug control, transnational organized crime, money laundering,

corruption and related international cooperation in criminal matters, as well as work capacity at the local level. In order to provide assistance to the Republic of Uzbekistan in eliminating the negative consequences of drug trafficking, UNODC provides assistance to national law enforcement agencies to improve border and customs controls, and increase their operational capacity in the fight against drug smuggling.

Considering the scale of the threat from drug trafficking, the Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan is taking measures to ensure the security of state borders, paying special attention to supplying customs posts with the necessary resources and means to combat drug trafficking, equipping customs posts with the latest technologies for detecting contraband (including narcotic drugs), the creation of a unified information system that summarizes all agencies for combating drug trafficking, thereby increasing the efficiency of the exchange of information of interest and reducing the time for transmitting information.

It must be borne in mind that the creativity of some drug traffickers has no limits and very often technical means and sniffer dogs are powerless. And then the professional qualities and operational experience of customs officers come to the force, which is one of the most effective ways to detect drug smuggling. Therefore, the customs service focuses on operational and analytical methods of combat, including introducing a profiling system, developing and practicing operational investigative training for employees. The Customs Committee carries out extensive work to study the best practices of leading countries in this area, exchanging practical and theoretical knowledge among employees, organizing business trips to European countries, and also assists in organizing and conducting trainings and conferences on current topics in this area. Interaction is based on international agreements and treaties. Thanks to foreign colleagues, the customs authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan have acquired a wealth of experience in combating drug smuggling in recent years.

The emphasis of cooperation is on preventing the supply of narcotic drugs, their analogues, and psychotropic substances, including identifying criminal business schemes, determining the preliminary route and border crossing points in transit countries, purchasing and selling, and laundering funds received from the sale of drugs. Also discussed at such meetings are the introduction of innovative technologies, the creation of special funds and the allocation of funds to combat smuggling, which analyze the movement of goods and commodity flows, identifying at-risk groups, which later becomes the basis for conducting inspections and special measures to suppress smuggling channels drugs. To summarize, it should be noted that all of the above proves that the success of identifying and suppressing drug smuggling largely depends on the experience and qualifications of law enforcement officers, their knowledge of all the features of the methods of moving narcotic drugs, their analogues, psychotropic substances across the customs border of the Republic of Uzbekistan, skills competently and timely carry out urgent measures to identify and suppress them. It is clear that the future of the country

largely depends on the level of fight against drug trafficking. In this regard, it is important to ensure a high level of cooperation among all law enforcement agencies both within the Republic of Uzbekistan and with other international organizations, thereby realizing the principle of the inevitability of punishment for what they have done.

LITERATURE:

1. Speech by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the 78th session of the UN General Assembly on September 19, 2023 (<https://president.uz/ru/lists/view/6679>)
2. Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 330 dated November 12, 2015 “On improving the procedure for import, export and transit through the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors, as well as control over their circulation.”
3. Resolution of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 12 dated April 28, 2017 “On judicial practice in criminal cases related to the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, their analogues and psychotropic substances”