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**ANTIDRUG POLICIES: PREVENTION OF DRUG PHENOMENA AND
FIGHT AGAINST DRUG INTERNATIONAL ROUTES. COOPERATION
STRATEGIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUG TRAFFICKING**

Rome, February 20-21, 2020

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS



ROME, 20-21 FEBRUARY 2020

NO DRUG NO PROBLEM

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

**“ANTIDRUG POLICIES: PREVENTION OF DRUG PHENOMENA AND FIGHT AGAINST DRUG
INTERNATIONAL ROUTES. COOPERATION STRATEGIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUG
TRAFFICKING”**

Rome, February 20-21, 2020

PREFACE by Franco Gabrielli, Prefetto, Chief of the Police - Director General of the Public Security

INTRODUCTION by Giuseppe Cucchiara, Dirigente Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza, Director of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services

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Chief of the Italian Police - Director General of the Public Security
Prefetto Franco Gabrielli

I was particularly pleased to accept the invitation of the DCSA Director, to make a few comments for the publication of the Proceedings of the International Conference “Antidrug policies: prevention of drug phenomena and fight against drug routes. Cooperation strategies in the fight against drug trafficking”, held in Rome, on 20-21 February 2020.

Likewise, I warmly welcomed the development of this international event, aimed at strengthening the cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking, in the belief that the collaboration between all actors of counter-narcotic action, is the most valuable opportunity to stem a threat which, first and foremost, is able to contaminate social life and undermine the democratic governance of States.

Our country is on the front line of this activity, even thanks to the intervention measures, skillfully developed by the DCSA, that – over 40 years after its establishment - continues to be one of the most long-lived and successful inter-agency experiences within the Department of Public Security and the national law enforcement forces and, probably, in the international scenario.

This system is based on the investigative coordination, circulation of information and logistic-operational support, able to optimize resources, promote a synergic action between the law enforcement authorities and finalize the “investigative experience and knowledge”; a model of efficiency and integration, that must be further enhanced and made available for those who, affected by this endemic and pervasive phenomenon, are looking for successful solutions and the best performing operational responses.

It is often repeated that illicit drug trafficking is a transnational phenomenon having no boundaries and that, paradoxically, risks to be facilitated by geography, State borders, differences in culture, legislation, operational procedures, priorities and investigative methods.

The right direction, which has powerfully emerged from this “two-day Conference”, is based on sharing experience, knowledge and information aimed at setting up common investigation methods, drawing up bilateral police cooperation agreements and new multilateral initiatives to completely achieve the objectives of the three International Conventions on drug control. A wide-ranging action cannot ignore the prevention activities, which have increasingly become integral and active part in the search of a really effective solution against drug spreading. As I already had the occasion to recall and as attested by this initiative organized in collaboration with the Department for Antidrug Policies, the reduction of drug demand leads to a decisive impact on the drug supply, too.



**Director of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services
Dirigente Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza Giuseppe Cucchiara**

I am very pleased to present the latest publication of the Direzione Centrale per i Servizi Antidroga, a small and easy-to-use volume, containing a brief synopsis of the speeches, the final document and pictures taken during the international Conference on “Antidrug policies: prevention and fight against drug phenomena and international routes. Cooperation strategies in the fight against drug trafficking”, held in Rome, on 20-21 February 2020.

I am particularly enthusiastic about this event that I wanted so keenly, considering it a concrete contribution to the technical collaboration enhancement process involving law enforcement, judicial authorities and countries. We strongly believe that such collaboration represents the most decisive resource in the fight against drug trafficking. As clearly recalled by the Chief of Italian Police – Director General of Public Security, who honoured us with his presence at the opening session, the drug trafficking is still the engine of all illicit activities carried out by the large-scale criminal syndicates. In order to face this terrible threat and reduce the gap separating us from the international criminal networks, the response must have the same international, cross-cutting and multilateral character.

We must join forces, “networking networks”, promoting the development of international investigations, exchanging and sharing information, enhancing information and investigation efforts of all countries and contributions from the regional and international agencies operating in this field.

In this perspective, this Conference, organized in cooperation with the Department for Antidrug policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, has intentionally become a large laboratory, generating facts and concrete commitments.

The final document, was approved by the delegates of the 54 participating Countries and by 6 international organizations: this document reiterated the steady determination of all countries to combat the terrible drug plague which continues to be a major risk to health, safety and welfare of all human kind.



SUMMARY OF SPEECHES



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Director of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services, Dirigente Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza Giuseppe Cucchiara (Italy)

PANEL 1

OPENING OF THE MEETING

ITALY
Director of the Central
Directorate for Anti-
drug Services, Dirigente
Generale di Pubblica
Sicurezza Giuseppe
Cucchiara

The DCSA Director opens the Conference “NO DRUG, NO PROBLEM”, welcoming all national Authorities, the delegates of the 54 participating countries and of the 6 international organizations attending the meeting, as well as the Judicial Authorities, the Liaison Officers and Law Enforcement Attachés and the Department for Antidrug Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, that collaborated in the organization of this event. Special emphasis is placed on drug trafficking as a global phenomenon, requiring a counter-narcotic action based on international cooperation. In particular, the rapidity of crime networks, that in order to achieve their criminal intent use inexhaustible economic, technical and logistic resources, consequently needs a joint and equally swift response.

Among the Mafia-type organizations involved in the drug trafficking, special attention is given to the ‘ndrangheta, that has extended its illicit business all over the world.

Illicit drug trafficking and spreading still represent a global risk to health, safety, well-being and quality of life of the whole humanity and to the legal economy, stability and security of the States.

In order to face this situation and reduce this gap it is necessary to join the forces, “networking the networks”, promoting the development of international investigations, by exchanging and sharing information, enhancing investigative and information efforts of each country as well as the contributions from regional and international agencies operating in this specific sector.

With a view to sharing good practices, special attention was also paid to the need of following money flows produced by the criminal organizations. The Director closes his welcoming address and thanks all the international law enforcement organizations participating in the two-day Conference.



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Counsellor Maria Contento, Head of the Department for Antidrug Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (Italy)

ITALY
Head of Department
Antidrug Policies
Presidency of the
Council of Ministers,
Counsellor Maria
Contento

After a brief greeting to the participants, the Counsellor confirmed the Department for Antidrug Policies [DPA] commitment to the prevention and fight against the abuse of narcotic drugs and psychoactive substances. In the last few years, the DPA has promoted several initiatives in coordination with other Administrations, such as the protocol signed in 2017 with the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR), known as “Cuora il Futuro”, to improve, among young people, the knowledge of the consequences connected to drug abuse (this project can be followed on a specific online platform and in person), and involves 6,000 teachers-trainers, and has seen the participation of over 15,000 units of the teaching staff.

In the framework of prevention, an important project is the National Early Warning System [SNAP]: this collaboration agreement was signed with the National Institute of Health (ISS) supervised by the Ministry of Health. This instrument allows, in the short terms, the information exchange at national and international levels, on new drugs and their possible new consumption modes.

Numerous projects were promoted by the DPA such as the inter-university survey of substances at chemical and toxicological levels, the funding of third sector associations involved in about 70 projects at local level, the project “ICARUS” carried out with the Direzione Centrale per i Servizi Antidroga [DCSA], the project with the General Command of the Carabinieri for the online monitoring of the New Psychoactive Substances [“NPS”], allowing the development and testing of innovative computer systems, which led to the identification of new molecules derived from Fentanyl; the project “HERMES”, again with the DCSA, aimed at monitoring the suspect postal consignments, and the one called “CRIPTOVAL”, carried out with the Guardia di Finanza, on the financial flows connected to drug trafficking, through the use of cryptocurrencies.

As to the rehabilitation activities, in 2019 a call for tender was addressed to the main actors working in the sector of drug addiction rehabilitation, which will be repeated in the current year 2020.



Commanding General of the Guardia di Finanza, Army Corps General Giuseppe Zafarana (Italy)

ITALY
Commanding General
of the Guardia di
Finanza,
Army Corps General
Giuseppe Zafarana

The General Commander of the Guardia di Finanza [G. di F.], after welcoming the participants in this Conference, spoke about drug trafficking as a terrible threat for public order and legal economy, considering the large number of drug abusers, drug-related deaths, the costs borne for drug-addict treatments and rehabilitation and all phenomena connected with drug consumption and pushing. This extremely prosperous illicit market, generates huge profits for the criminal organizations, amounting to several tens of billions of Euros only in Europe, with international large-scale drug trades carried out through the typical mechanisms of globalization and the use of sophisticated technologies and numerous logistic facilities, connecting the producing areas with the trading ones.

These activities allow the re-investment of illicit profits in profitable and diversified investments, duly covered and distributed on the legitimate market, substantially distorting the rules of competition from an economic, legal and social point of view. The law enforcement activity goes through the coordination of the DCSA. In this context, the G. di F. operate as the economic-financial police agency, not only by means of the traditional counteracting activities conducted by the Antidrug Operational Groups [G.O.A.], into the criminal syndicates such as the 'ndrangheta, a real criminal holding company active worldwide, but also through an international cooperation network and a close collaboration with the other law enforcement Italian and foreign authorities as well as with international Organizations. Another important role played by the G. di F., as Maritime Police Agency, is that of monitoring and seize the containers entering or transiting the national territory through the main Italian ports. Among them, the ports of Livorno, Genoa and Gioia Tauro are the most frequently used hubs to introduce drugs into Italy.

The counter-narcotic activity in the national maritime areas, as main drug entry points into our Country, is ensured by the G. di F., as the Sea Police Agency, through air and sea units that also operate on the high seas, supporting the investigative land-based authorities. The air and sea units of the G. di F., with input from the DCSA, have seized in the last two-year period over 80 tons of hashish within the territorial waters. The G. di F. obviously give great importance to the investigations aimed at following drug money movements and combating money laundering and re-investment into the legal economy. In the framework of antidrug investigative activities, the G. di F. services follow the financial flows, systematically focusing on the financial investigations aimed at identifying assets and money to seize and then confiscate. They develop financial investigations even abroad, through international networks, overcoming the "tricks", such as fictitious holders, front companies or a constant use of trust companies, hindering the investigations. The General Commander of the G. di F. closed its speech emphasizing the need to further reinforce national and internal cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking, by improving intelligence and counteracting activities, investing resources to enhance these instruments and achieve a greater effectiveness in the fight against drug spreading.



Commanding General of the Carabinieri, Army Corps General Giovanni Nistri (Italy)

ITALY
Commanding General of
the Carabinieri,
Army Corps General
Giovanni Nistri

After the welcome address, the Commanding General of the Carabinieri stated that the fight against drug trafficking is the paradigm of the fight against criminal organizations in general. Criminal groups constantly change their modus operandi and their criminal activities with negative repercussions on the licit markets, risk to public health and undermining the essence of democracy.

In order to cope with this phenomenon, there is the need to curb the spreading of the new narcotic drugs and to dismantle international organizations. A global effort is needed, in order to avoid the “balloon effect”, i.e. it must be avoided that such organizations rise above the legal systems of the different states and cannot be hit anymore. It is thus necessary to take into account the asymmetry between the different national legal systems. The Italian approach can be a model at the international level. An example can be the distribution of the investigations according to the principle of the “chronological rotation”, laid down by the Chief of the Police – Director General of Public Security on 6 August 2010, which guarantees the synergy between the law enforcement authorities. An example of this rotation is an antidrug operation carried out in 2019, which was entrusted to the Carabinieri but also involved the Italian Customs Authorities and the Guardia di Finanza.

At the European level the European Investigation Order and the Joint Investigation Teams are extremely useful tools. Mention must also be made of the projects promoted by Europol (also through the training of local law enforcement authorities), EROJUST and the European Union, among which the project “EU-ACT”, which consists of training and mentoring activities in favour of the states along the heroin route.

Another important challenge consists in identifying the New Psychoactive Substances – which are a serious threat above all to young people - as soon as they are introduced onto the market, analyzing the choices made by consumers.

Already in 2012 the Carabinieri recognized this need, developing the “RIS-NEWS” projects and the “NPS-On Line” platform. The RIS-NEWS projects were developed in cooperation with the Department for Anti-Drug Policies and involve the four Forensic Science Departments and the 22 forensic science laboratories of the Carabinieri which carry out analyses on the drugs identified in Italy. The NPS-Online platform was developed in agreement with the Central Directorate for Anti-Drug Services with the support of the Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Public Health Safety. Within these activities, 622 reports were made to the National Health System and 1,100 illegal sites were identified (70 of which were shut down).

Within this preventive and investigative framework, the activity carried out by law enforcement agencies, though effective, is not sufficient to curb the phenomenon, which has an important social feature. It is thus fundamental for law enforcement authorities to thoroughly support families, the education and the volunteering sector, which is steadily committed in the field of prevention, education and treatment of the victims of this plague.



Chief of Police - Director General of Public Security, Prefetto Franco Gabrielli (Italy)

ITALY
Chief of Police –
Director General of the
Public Security,
Pref. Franco Gabrielli

The Chief of Police welcomed the distinguished authorities and delegates from the 54 participating countries, stating that as representatives of the producer and transit countries they are important stakeholder in the fight against drug trafficking. The Chief of Police also welcomed the representatives of the 6 international organizations and of the judicial authorities. He extended a special thank to the Director of the Central Directorate for Anti-Drug Services for his commitment in his three-year mandate and above all for the impulse given to the Law Enforcement Attaché network abroad.

The change of leadership at DCSA on the basis of a rotation between the Italian Law Enforcement Authorities is a successful example of cooperation, because it offers each agency the opportunity to share its “knowledge” and skills. Mention must be made in particular of the efforts aimed at enhancing the role of the law enforcement attaches abroad on the basis of a holistic and more complete approach rather than a sectorial one. However, cooperation does not mean that each agency has to set aside its own peculiarities and role, as is the case with the operational role, which is well accomplished by the Guardia di Finanza acting as Sea Police Force. The collaboration in the fight against drug trafficking between the different national stakeholders is promoted and supported by the Department of Public Security through DCSA, closely following the international scenario in order to provide better services to the citizens.

Drug trafficking is the core business of the illegal economy and the main cause of social weakness in terms of security, health and social system as a whole, undermining the democratic governance of the States and severely jeopardizing the mechanisms of the legal economy. It is a complex issue which has to be tackled in a spirit of unity.

Hence the need to talk not only of counteraction – as is the case with the constant fight against organized crime and mafia-type syndicates – but also of prevention. Mention must also be made of prevention and the crucial role played by the Department for Anti-Drug Polices in this field. Investing in prevention activities may significantly reduce drug demand. Drug trafficking, though immoral, is nonetheless a kind of market, depending on market rules.

A rising demand inevitably brings about an increase in the supply with evident repercussions on the whole social fabric, also considering that the average age of consumers has remarkably decreased and the number of people using drugs has increased.

Drug trafficking and the other drug-related offences must be tackled with determination in order to curb their incidence at best, exploiting the connective tissue made up of the exchange of information and the experiences gathered by all the stakeholders and working together on both sides, both in terms of counteraction and of prevention.

Drug trafficking is undoubtedly an emergency which will accompany humanity for a long time, it is thus necessary to combat and curb it and to involve all stakeholder, who play a necessary and indispensable role.



ANTIDRUG POLICIES: PREVENTION OF DRUG PHENOMENA AND FIGHT AGAINST DRUG INTERNATIONAL ROUTES.
COOPERATION STRATEGIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUG TRAFFICKING

The Chief of Police concluded his presentation by underlying the importance of the Conference as a good opportunity for improving drug counteraction.

PANEL 2

POLICY ON THE SPREADING OF NARCOTIC DRUGS. NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROFILES

moderator: Dr. Lirio Abbate, journalist

EMCDDA
Director,
Dr. Alexis Goosdeel

EU antidrug policies:
future perspectives for
demand reduction

The Director of the European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addictions [EMCDDA], in opening his speech, shared the data mentioned in the last year's report, specifying that the figures relating to Italy are basically in line with the European values.

The events relating to the drug phenomenon occurring at global level, due to the Internet and the darknet, have a direct impact at local level (such phenomenon is commonly known as "*Glocal*"); in this regard, it was observed, along with EUROPOL, that the volume of sales on the Internet is doubling every year. Furthermore, a remarkable increase in the types of substances, of synthetic or herbal origin, was noticed.

The SNAP has been an effective instrument to combat such a phenomenon for more than twenty years. It is a perfect example of cooperation, but it is only known to insiders. Its functioning is guaranteed by observers at national level who continuously interact rapidly exchanging data and information. According to recent information, synthetic drugs and cocaine are, at present, the most widespread narcotics on the Internet, while most deaths are caused by a mixture of benzodiazepines and heroin.

Now, such substances with a high level of purity, are available on the drug market in large quantities and at relatively low prices. The EU is committed to the fight against this phenomenon through international cooperation. Thanks to such common actions, the NPS launched onto the market shifted from two to one per week, on average.

Among the new threats, a new group of synthetic opioids, different from Fentanyl, was detected, while in Sweden the "*vaping*", with 90% of THC (a practice imported from the U.S.A), became very popular.

As said before, the diffusion is increasingly facilitated by the online market. The response to such emergencies is not always adequate: although the incidence of deaths associated with such substances is not significant, it is necessary to remind the rulers, that the danger was underestimated. This means that, drug trafficking is a priority like illegal migration and terrorism, also because such a scourge kills more people than terrorism every year. In this regard, training activities for personnel involved in prevention are improving, also through *e-learning* platforms.

ITALY

Director of the II Service
“Studies, Research and
Information” of the
Central Directorate for
Anti-Drug Services,
Brigadier General of the
Guardia di Finanza
Nicola De Benedictis

Data gathering and information analysis

The Director of the II Service of DCSA started his presentation by summarizing the specific duties of DCSA, among which the gathering of the data provided by the local offices and their in-depth analysis from a strategic and an operational point of view. The in-depth knowledge of the drug trafficking dynamics is essential to carry out such an activity.

The spreading of synthetic drugs is undoubtedly increasing but besides prevention and counteraction, data analysis is an essential part of the fight against drug trafficking, which poses a serious threat both to the countries of destination and to the social fabric of drug producer countries.

As provided for by the Italian legislation, DCSA has a central role in gathering and analyzing the data provided by the local offices. This activity allows to better target the strategies so to anticipate the actions of drug trafficking organizations at the national and the international level.

As already mentioned by other speakers, it is evident that drug trafficking generates a huge turnover and can control some geographical areas and some important licit market sectors. It is estimated that drug trafficking has at present a turnover of about 450 billion dollars. Since NPS do not need particular climatic conditions and temperatures to be produced, new scenarios can be forecast.

Data gathering is also important to harmonize good practices and thoroughly analyze each aspect of the threat, providing a guidance to the political authorities involved.

Ad-hoc reports, including the DCSA annual report, aim at giving an overview of the situation in real time, suggesting the so-called “good practices”. The analysis of the phenomenon may be interpreted both as a warning signal and as a tool to develop new strategies.

Within this framework DCSA acts as a leader in the fight against drug trafficking also thanks to its multiagency architecture.

OSCE

Head of Strategic Police
Matters Unit,
Dr. Guy Vinet

An increase in opium
production was
registered in
Afghanistan compared
with a reduction of the
seizures along the
Northern route : impact
on heroin demand and
supply in Europe

The representative of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe [OSCE] reports a significant increase in opium production in Afghanistan compared with a reduction of seizures along the Northern route, with a clear impact on heroin “demand-supply” all over Europe.

In this context, it is urgent to identify a single and shared solution to this problem, which is crucial for the social implications of this threat.

The OSCE is an organization aimed at cooperation having among its tasks to promote effective drug policies, through a holistic approach to this problem, considering the numerous implications of this phenomenon which undermines the foundations of our society. For this reason, within the OSCE, there are also departments addressed to police-related activities. The drug problem falls in the basket of the police unit. The Afghan issue is just an example of the OSCE approach in international contexts: in Afghanistan, besides the above-mentioned increase in opium production, there is an evident difficulty in controlling its very long borders with the neighboring countries, as in the case of Tajikistan. The latter is used for drug consignments towards the destination countries. The OSCE is a leader in a training and specialization project in favour of the law enforcement authorities of Afghanistan and other countries on the fight against drug trafficking, in particular the online drug trade on the deep web

and the darknet. In particular, the OSCE is organizing regular training activities for Afghan police officers working on drug issues with the support of the Russian Federation.

Of course, the OSCE activities must be analyzed and approved by the 57 participating States. The challenge is often about coordination; as in many other domains, everybody would like to coordinate the law enforcement actions, but no one wants to be coordinated. While there is a consensus to recognize the drug problem as a huge, dramatic and world-wide threat, the consensus tends to vanish when it comes to ways out. It is clear that confidence is essential in the context of cooperation between various players who have to overcome initial mistrust based on different national approaches.

POLAND

Deputy Head of Chief
Commander Office
Police Central Bureau of
Investigation,
Sub Commissioner
Michal Aleksandrowicz

**Drug trafficking: the
concrete expression of
the UE policy through
EMPACT**

The Polish delegate started its presentation referring to the EU multidisciplinary platform against criminal threats [EMPACT], headed by Poland and Belgium in the synthetic drug target group.

During his presentation he particularly spoke about opioids and cannabinoids, which create the greatest problems.

Another problem is represented by the GBL (gamma-butyrolactone) a prodrug having physical effects. This substance is not currently banned from all countries (in some countries it is used in the manufacture of detergents), thus creating collaboration problems during investigations.

Another example is given by the substance 3,4-methylenedioxyamphetamine [MDA], not included in the Tables of controlled substances, despite its doping effects. New drugs are synthesized based on the fact that some molecules, or small modifications of them, are not scheduled as controlled drugs.

The synthetic drug trafficking approach is organized on an annual basis and this activity also involves non-EU Countries in several joint initiatives, such as training courses, asset enquiries and investigations into the virtual markets.

Recently, tracking models of prohibited synthetic drugs have been realized by controlling the substances used for their synthesis and the equipment for their manufacture, that can be sold on the legitimate market.

Moreover, the synthetic drug trafficking is also due to other illegal practices such as labels counterfeiting.

Since the fight against organized crime relies on the domestic legislation, the promotion of a more flexible legislative framework will make this fight more incisive, so to allow an easier inclusion of new synthesized chemical substances among the prohibited controlled drugs.

UNODC

Drug Research Expert,
Dr. Thomas Pietschmann

**Drugs and social
deviancy: prevention**

The delegate of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC] indicated several objectives on which efforts of the countries involved in the drug threat should be focused.

First of all, a good form of fight against drug trafficking would be creating alternative crops to the farmers of the drug source countries, to replace the plants used to produce illicit drugs.

Another goal to achieve would be the organization of international forums between the law enforcement agencies in order to reach and consolidate a mutual trust between the member countries.

Another important aspect is prevention in the developing countries. In fact, the phenomenon of cultivation of plants containing active principles used to synthesize illicit drugs is more prosperous in the poor countries which are easy prey for corruption.

It is evident that the counter-narcotic action must be addressed to both drug demand and supply. The uncontrolled spread of drugs is materialized in the exponential growth of their consumption: this effect is comparable to that of an epidemic. Since the peak of the epidemic curve for some drugs can last for several years, it is necessary to work on prevention so to avoid that the drug spreading could reach such levels. This result is often achieved, even though the graphs seem to show, in some cases, apparently uncontrollable drug spreading. In fact, the increase in drug consumption would be much higher without the law enforcement action and UNODC initiatives. Surveys on drug production and consumption show that there is a close connection between demand and supply. Although there was a decrease by 71% of opium production with respect to the production volumes of the beginning of the last century, during the following decades a new increase was registered in the quantities of drugs produced. However, the law enforcement authorities effectively fought worldwide against this trend by increasing the seizures. For instance, a decrease in heroin flows along the Northern route (crossing Russia) was registered, while the fentanyl trafficking is constantly increasing.



From left to right:

- Brigadier General of the Guardia di Finanza Nicola De Benedictis, Director of the II Service “Studies, Research and Information” of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services **(Italy)**
- Dr. Lirio Abbate, Deputy Director of the italian weekly magazine “L’Espresso”, panel moderator **(Italy)**
- Sub Commissioner Michal Aleksandrowicz, Deputy Head of Chief Commander Office Police Central Bureau of Investigation **(Poland)**
- Dirigente Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza Giuseppe Cucchiara, Director of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services **(Italy)**
- Dr. Thomas Pietschmann, Drug Research Expert, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime **(UNODC)**
- Dr. Alexis Goosdeel, Director European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction **(EMCDDA)**
- Dr. Guy Vinet, Head of Strategic Police Matters Unit, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe **(OSCE)**

PANEL 3

THREAT, ROUTES AND COOPERATION. ROUTES AND DYNAMICS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

moderator: Dr. Valerio Cataldi, journalist

ARGENTINA
Attached Prosecutor
Procuraduría de
Narcocriminalidad,
Dr. Patricia Cisnero

Rapidity is needed to win this challenge: how to improve and make judicial cooperation more effective and accelerate procedures for letters rogatory, extraditions and special operations

The Argentinian Prosecutor immediately focused the debate on the need for rapidity and promptness in the fight against the drug phenomenon, above all through international cooperation. A more effective judicial cooperation is needed both with Latin American countries and with the countries of other continents, also accelerating the procedures for special operations, letters rogatory and extraditions.

Argentina is a transit country of the drug trafficked towards Europe, in particular towards Italy and Spain by sea route and towards Chile by land route, considering the very long border between the two countries.

Argentina has thus a strategic position to create and manage the information exchange networks with other countries and the international organizations involved.

In order to cope with drug trafficking, in 2013 an Office of the Attorney General for Drug-related Crimes (PROCUNAR) was created. This Office coordinates all Prosecutor's offices at the national level which have specific jurisdiction over investigations into drug trafficking, money laundering and precursors control.

This national Office has contributed to overcome the concept of information exclusivity, allowing to share it with increasing rapidity and promptness. Argentina successfully cooperates with a series of countries, including Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal and Belgium and this has allowed to accelerate and better target its counter-activity.

A practical example of this more effective response in the drug fight is given by the investigation which was carried out in cooperation with the Netherlands and allowed to unlock a last-generation cellular phone used by corrupted officers involved in drug trafficking. In order to concretely carry out the fight against drug trafficking there is the need to reinforce mutual trust, collaboration and cooperation between law enforcement agencies, using Joint Investigation Teams with other countries, including Italy and Spain.

CARICC
Director,
Major General
Rustam Aziz Miralizoda

Effectiveness of police cooperation between Central Asia countries: weak and strong points

Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre [CARICC] is an interstate coordination centre for combating drug trafficking and precursors diversion which cooperates with many regional and International organizations. Its member states are:

Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. There are also observers, among which Italy and the main international organizations operating in this field, including the International Criminal Police Organization [INTERPOL] and the Southeast European Law Enforcement [SELEC]. Also Afghanistan is going to join the centre.

Among the specific tasks of this organizations, mention must be made of the coordination of short-and-long term drug investigations and the following

assessment of the results of the operations, which allow to make an analytical evaluation of the data gathered and study drug counterstrategies.

The requests for adhesion to CARICC are increasing. The official language is still Russian, also considering that participating states are within the sphere of interest of this country and that they share the same language, culture and methodological approach. Moreover, all the participating countries are along one of the most important drug trafficking routes

CARICC is confronted with many problems in terms of organization, economic coverage and identification of the areas where to invest its funds.

In accomplishing its duties, good, consolidated and shared practices at international level are constantly used.

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Chief of Antinarcotics
Police, Brigadier General
Mohammad Masoud
Zabetian

A country on the front
line along the heroin
route: perspectives of
counter-action and
international
cooperation along the
main drug routes
towards consumption
areas

Iran is crossed by the major routes of heroin trafficking towards the distribution and consumption countries; it is necessary to operate on such routes with targeted actions and through international cooperation with the countries affected by this phenomenon. Although the size of opium cultivation areas in Afghanistan has decreased, the drug production has not declined as well. Indeed, a significant growth has recently been registered.

Trying to stem the continuous transfer of large heroin quantities across its borders, Iran implemented control and defence measures along the border with Afghanistan. Long stretches of defensive walls, moats and barbed wire were built, in order to facilitate and strengthen the fight against drug trafficking with an increase in the seizures of transiting drug shipments. In 2018 over 806 tons of drugs were seized and 814 tons in 2019.

A constant and exponential increase in synthetic drugs production was observed in that region, as it was shown by the high number of police operations carried out along the land routes and at airports. Significant methamphetamine production was noticed in the country. Even if this intensive activity to counteract the drug scourge was carried out with success, it has not been free of consequences: 3,800 police agents have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty in the last 30 years.

The fight against drug trafficking must necessarily go beyond the seizures of heroin and precursors: it is necessary to help the Afghan government and people to abandon opium production and dedicate themselves to licit plantations.

Other tools of primary importance, to implement the fight against drug trafficking, are the obligation to trace chemical precursors, the development of investigation techniques regarding illicit assets, also used to finance terrorism.

ITALY

Director of the I Service
"General and
International Affairs" of
the Central Directorate
for Anti-drug Services
Dirigente Superiore della
Polizia di Stato
Emilio Russo

DCSA: International
police cooperation

National and international cooperation are the backbone of DCSA, since the agency is a perfect blend of the experiences and peculiarities of the participating law enforcement agencies, also on the basis of its long-lasting tradition dating back to the Anti-Drug offices which were created before it.

The present multi-agency was created in 1990 within the Department of Public Security and since then DCSA has been constantly committed to develop the relations with the other countries both at bilateral and multilateral level.

The law enforcement attachés, once known as Liaison Officers, are one of DCSA

undisputable points of strength. They are capillary posted to the most sensitive countries both in terms of drug production and traffic and in terms of national and international criminal relevance. They are the points of reference to develop the cooperation with the hosting country, leading to bilateral agreements, in particular Anti-Drug Operational Memorandums. They are agreements which allow the signatory countries to better target their operational activities, taking into account their operational needs and legal requirements.

Besides bilateral relations, mention must also be made of multilateral cooperation with the involvement of the international police agencies, such as for example INTERPOL. The training exchange between the law enforcement agencies of the different countries on the basis of their experiences is also part of the international cooperation.

Indeed, DCSA organizes *“in house”* ad-hoc training courses destined for Italian and foreign law enforcement officers, in order to exchange techniques, *expertise* and good practices. Within this framework it is increasingly necessary to maximize counteraction through information technology (which is more and more shared and implemented by international networking operations) and share the results. Computer science has turned to be an indispensable tool to fight against organized crime, which constantly updates its technological means in order to elude controls by the law enforcement agencies.

It is unbelievable to combat drug trafficking alone, networking is the key to success!

MAOC-N

Executive Director
Maritime Analysis and
Operations Center -
Narcotics,
Mr. Michael O’Sullivan

The Director of the Maritime Analysis and Operations Center- Narcotics [MAOC-N] points out the importance of international cooperation through a network overcoming the state borders. The Liaison officers of the MAOC-N member countries, indeed, already work with a *“Single Team”* approach.

**Not only cocaine from
the Atlantic: the
Mediterranean sea as a
drug motorway
between Africa and
European consuming
countries**

The results of the drug seizures (30 tons of drugs since January 2019), although deriving from reports made by single countries, are later shared and analyzed by all member countries. The MAOC-N activities are focused, on one side, on the fight against cocaine trafficking carried out via merchant ships crossing the Atlantic Ocean, through the partnership with West African countries and, on the other side, on the so-called *“motorways”* outlined on the Mediterranean sea to allow drug transfer from Africa to the destination European countries, among which Italy.

According to EMCDDA, the volume of cocaine trafficking in Europe amounts to 9.1 billion dollars. Such sums are, obviously, a great incentive for organized crime trafficking drugs in the European continent. It is, therefore, easy to understand the reasons for drug production growth in Latin America. As already mentioned, through the effective cooperation between MAOC-N and the transit African countries it is possible to combat the trafficking in significant drug quantities. The fight against drug spreading cannot be carried out without joining our forces.

The synergic development of such activities is fundamental. It is carried out by the organization member states, by sharing intelligence, with the aim of intercepting the drug loads transported via sea. Through the cooperation of

participating countries it was possible to seize several ships, often unsuspected luxury yachts, used to transport narcotics (recently, even small submarines have been used in drug trafficking).

The cooperation between MAOC-N and the African countries affected by drug trafficking routes started several years ago, thanks to a *Memorandum of Understanding* with Portugal, which initiated various cooperation activities.

MOROCCO

General Directorate of
National Security,
Prefect of Police
Dr. Mohammed Dkhissi

The Prefect of Police, Central Director of the Judicial Police at the General Direction of National Security Rabat-Morocco, wished, first of all, to express his many thanks to the Italian authorities, for their warm welcome and invitation to Morocco to take part in this very important international event.

New routes in light of
current geopolitical
crises and conflict
situations

Subsequently, he clarified that despite the substantial divergences that can sometimes occur between national approaches, all countries are politically committed to carry out global strategies, more focused on combating transnational criminal networks which transport large quantities of drugs and psychotropic substances, and amass significant revenues from this illicit activity. During this intervention, he also emphasized that the illicit trafficking of drugs and psychotropic substances, all types combined, is, and has always been, one of the priorities of the Moroccan security services, against which Morocco has mobilized significant human and logistical resources, notably within the framework of a multidisciplinary strategy adopted for several years, in order to eradicate it and neutralize its harmful impact on the health, social and security levels.

In addition, the Moroccan authorities consider that the key of success of the international community against this common challenge is to work tirelessly for the strengthening of international cooperation, to which Morocco reserves absolute importance, in the framework of its national strategy and its unwavering commitment on the international scene, since this cooperation allows the dismantling of criminal organizations operating not only in the trafficking of cannabis resin, but also cocaine and psychotropic substances [ecstasy and benzodiazepines] imported in large quantities to the national territory, from certain countries of South America and Europe.

THE NETHERLANDS

Head of National
Criminal Investigations
Division,
Dr. Andy Kraag

Dynamics of the
synthetic drugs
evolution and routes:
the Netherlands
experience

The geolocation is one of the new technological instruments used by the Netherlands to combat the drug trafficking phenomenon.

Holland, is both a transit country of cocaine shipments coming from South America (in the last years, ever-increasing cocaine seizures have been made in this country), and a producer of NPS and MDMA (the latter in huge quantities). The detection and dismantling of clandestine laboratories has been strongly encouraged. However, an increase in synthetic drugs production has been registered, whose business has proved to be more profitable than that of other types of drugs.

During the enforcement activities, the analysis of data gathered is used to better target the investigations (*Data Driven Investigation*).

The online drug trade on the dark web is another important phenomenon to monitor. In parallel to this activity, the interception and decoding of encrypted communications are increasing (in this regard, there is a good example of effective cooperation with Australia).



Another wide investigation field is that of the asset enquiries, which are carried out following the flows of money derived from criminal activities.

In conclusion, the Dutch delegate has reiterated the need to work together for the growth of cooperation and information sharing, with a view to reinforcing the mutual trust between the collaborating countries.



From Left to right:

- Militia Major General Rustam Aziz Miralizoda, Director Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Center (**CARICC**)
- Brigadier General Mohammad Masoud Zabetian, Chief of Antinarcotics Police (**Islamic Republic of Iran**)
- Dirigente Superiore della Polizia di Stato Emilio Russo, Director of the I Service "General and International Affairs" of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services (**Italy**)
- Dr. Valerio Cataldi, journalist, panel moderator (**Italy**)
- Dr. Patricia Cisnero, Attached Prosecutor Procuraduría de Narcocriminalidad (**Argentina**)
- Dirigente Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza Giuseppe Cucchiara, Director of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services (**Italy**)
- Dr. Michael O'Sullivan, Executive Director of Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre-Narcotics (**MAOC-N**)
- Dr. Mohammed Dkhissi, Prefect of Police, General Directorate of National Security (**Morocco**)
- Dr. Andy Kraag, Head of National Criminal Investigations Division (**The Netherlands**)

PANEL 4

THREAT, ROUTES AND COOPERATION. THREAT ASSESSMENT

moderator: Dr. Valerio Cataldi, journalist

ITALY
Anti-Mafia and Anti-
Terrorism Prosecutor,
Dr. Federico
Cafiero De Raho

Drug trafficking as a
primary source of
income of organized
crime: the fight against
drug trafficking as a
primary tool to hit
mafias

It is recognized that drug trafficking is a global phenomenon, which is completely managed by mafia-type organizations. It is true that besides Italian Mafias there are also Mexican, Colombian and Brazilian Mafias but it is also true that 'Ndrangheta has the leadership in this sector. Its annual turnover, only considering cocaine trafficking, is estimated at about 30 billion Euros. This money is then reinvested on the licit market through new companies which are created by the Mafia establishment.

'Ndrangheta is capable of building and consolidating networks all around the world, importing to Italy huge quantities of drugs through the main Italian ports (Livorno, Gioia Tauro, Genoa) or, in case of need, moving this traffic to other European countries (Belgium, Holland and Spain), Western Africa and the Balkan region. The drugs are purchased or managed by the 'Ndrangheta and then sold to other criminal organizations which are in charge of distributing them in Italy or abroad.

Since the eighties, 'ndrangheta, has been using organizations of reference in the drug producer and transit countries and this has highlighted the need to develop extraordinary forms of police and judicial cooperation. Many 'Ndragheta members have chosen countries like Colombia, Costa Rica and Venezuela as their place of residence. In this way they can better manage the cocaine traffic in close connection with the producers.

As far as Italy is concerned, DCSA is responsible for the coordination of drug investigations. Moreover, the excellent relations between national law enforcement agencies and their foreign counterparts help police cooperation to be successful. Cooperation and the rapid circulation of information both at the judicial and the police level avoid useless delays and lead to excellent results in the fight against transnational criminal organizations.

The National Anti-Mafia and Anti-Terrorism Directorate [DNAA], in cooperation with DCSA, is implementing a project on molecular tracing through which it is possible to obtain information on the origin of specific drug lots with interesting feedbacks at the investigative level.

Centralization of knowledge, coordination of investigations and the pursue of common goals are the core of DNAA activity. In order to be successful in the drug fight, the investigative goals must coincide with those of the foreign judicial authorities and there is the need to operate at the same speed - if not at a higher speed - as Mafia-type syndicates.

COLOMBIA

Fiscal General de la
Nación,

Dr. Fabio Espitia Garzón

How to achieve the best
results to combat
cocaine production and
trafficking within a
more fruitful
international
cooperation

In the years between 1988 and 2013 many people died in Colombia as a consequence of drug production, recently more than 500 police agents have been murdered in fighting against drug trafficking.

Within this framework, the cooperation with other countries is fundamental. Countries like the USA, Spain, Italy, Germany, France and many supranational bodies are active partners of Colombia in the fight against this phenomenon.

However, counteraction must be accompanied by prevention, closely controlling the territory and through a scientific research which aims at inhibiting the doping capacity of the active principles in the leaves of cultivated cannabis and coca plants.

The fight against coca cultivation and its connected cocaine production follows different directions, for example the government has applied quotas to gasoline and controls are carried out on the bulk shipments. Criminal organizations overcome the problem by smuggling gasoline, since it is indispensable for the production process. Methods are being studied to inhibit the doping capacity by using bacteria in the cement paste or in the gum mixtures used in producing cocaine paste base. Besides counteraction, Colombia is working on prevention.

Dr. Nicola Gratteri, Italian Public Prosecutor intervened in the debate suggesting to monitor not only gasoline but also pig urine which is used in the chemical processes connected to the drug production. He also suggested that international cooperation should also follow another path, which is represented by the chemical precursors used to process narcotic drugs. The Prosecutor hoped for a stronger and more incisive action by the United Nations that should oblige the main drug producers (Colombia, Bolivia and Peru) to radically convert their cultivations.

The Colombian delegate partly agreed with the Prosecutor, stressing however that the control of gasoline is a priority for Colombia.

CANADA

Director General
Royal Canadian
Mounted Police,
Dr. Michel Arcand

New challenges:
Fentanyl and other
synthetic drugs

Fentanyl growth in Canada has been gradual. Since 2017, considering its widespread use, efforts have been made to stop the production of this synthetic opioid. Nonetheless, in 2019 the number of fentanyl deaths amounted to 20,000.

The cooperation with the USA – the bordering country with which Canada concretely shares the problem of the growing consumption of fentanyl – and Italy was crucial to understand how fentanyl is traded. This cooperation led to the creation for example of a working group with the Italian postal police.

The investigations into this traffic highlighted that fentanyl illegal trade was not managed by the organized crime groups but by small “entrepreneurs”, who through the dark web sale made huge profits.

It was ascertained that the route towards the consumer countries started in China. At the beginning, the cooperation with China allowed to reduce the flows coming from that area but then, following the increased controls, Chinese traffickers moved to other areas of delivery.

The control of precursors coming from Mexico to Canada is now another problem. Many clandestine laboratories were found both in Mexico and in Canada. Recent investigations have highlighted that fentanyl is no longer

introduced into Canada only by postal parcels but also by other methods. Hence it is to be assumed that organized crime is now involved in such a traffic.

Again, the cooperation with the USA has been particularly effective in monitoring precursors trafficking. Besides the efforts to reduce the dark web sale connected to the constant increase in the consumption of synthetic drugs, another challenge for Canada is the fight against the spreading of cocaine and heroin. It is evident that in such a wide transnational context, the fight against drug trafficking must clearly rely on international cooperation and the constant information exchange. In particular, being the dark web a market without physical borders it is necessary to combat these phenomena and identify production laboratories as soon as possible.

CHILE
Head of the
Antinarcotics and
Organized Crime
Prefecture –
Pref. Roy Farias Dee

Chile's commitment to
curb the cocaine
trafficking coming from
the main producing
areas: how cooperation
can be a real added
value

The Chilean delegate reports a constant increase in the seizures by local law enforcement agencies, involving not only the drugs in transit to other countries but also the drugs destined for the domestic consumption. It is difficult to control the long country border; to this end the Government has urged all the agencies involved, including many private bodies, to cooperate. At present, it is estimated that 98% of the drugs entering the country is destined for the domestic consumption showing that Chile is no longer a transit country only. In the past, narcotic drugs came above all from Paraguay, passing through different routes, while at present narcotic drugs are introduced into Chile mainly from Colombia. The analysis of the drug flows through the country has highlighted that the majority of the arrested traffickers are Chilean nationals or subjects who legally migrated into the country, thus inducing the Government to review its laws on migration. Chile is closely cooperating with the countries of origin of the traffickers in narcotic drugs and other substances also because it has become the final country of arrival of drug trafficking. Also in Chile greater attention is paid to the investigations into the flows of drug profits.

At present the major drug-related problems are the growth of drug consumers and the social-health consequences of drug addiction.

INTERPOL
Policy Analyst,
Dr. Lisa Garin Michaud

Information sharing as
a tool to increase police
cooperation:
perspectives and future
initiatives. The
effectiveness of
multilateral
cooperation in an
increasingly complex
world

The mandate of INTERPOL, that counts 194 member countries, consists in facilitating international law enforcement cooperation: international cooperation and information sharing is the only way to efficiently tackle transnational organized crime. The enhanced exchange of information through INTERPOL's global secure communication system (I-24/7) constitutes one of the keys to address international crime. Drug trafficking organizations, like other transnational criminals, are taking advantage of our difficulties to cooperate, by not trusting our counterparts to exchange information and from the impediments linked also to the lack of harmonization of national legislations on judicial matters. By connecting law enforcement worldwide, INTERPOL is able to support its member countries through the sharing of expertise, skills, best practices and innovative capabilities. Global illicit drug trafficking is flourishing, both in relation to synthetic substances and traditional drugs.

Notices, especially the Green and Blue notices, enable the alerting, requesting, and transmission of information from and to INTERPOL Member countries. In addition, there are Purple notices which serve to raise the awareness on specific

modus operandi, new substances, routes or patterns and trends of the market. In addition to the regular assistance to law enforcement agencies worldwide in their daily investigations, INTERPOL provides direct support to its Member countries in post seizure investigations, by connecting law enforcement agencies of the various countries involved, collecting and analyzing data and coordinating follow up operational activities.

The information collected and processed by INTERPOL, is then analyzed and transformed into actionable intelligence for the use of its Member countries and for the development of targeted operational and capacity building activities for the benefit of the global law enforcement community.

Specific INTERPOL capabilities are available for Member countries to target the illicit drugs trade in particular. As such, the RELIEF database, is the unique capability at international level enabling the automatic comparison of the toolmark traces left by the pressing machines used to produce illicit drugs (drug bricks or tablets). Moreover it also enables the automatic comparison of the logos figuring on the illicit substances as well as the comparison of the chemical composition of the substances.

The tools and services developed by INTERPOL are useful to the member countries in their investigations and have already led to important seizures and disruption of organized crime activities, thanks to tangible information exchange.

Crime does not have borders, therefore secure, rapid and dynamic instruments must be used to efficiently tackle it.

ITALY

Director of the Central
Anti-crime Directorate,
Dirigente Generale di
Pubblica Sicurezza
Francesco Messina

Operational aspects and
the fight against
national criminal
organizations: lessons
learned

The activity carried out by DCSA undoubtedly shows that the synergy between law enforcement agencies has brought about excellent results in Italy.

However, according to the Director of the Criminal Police Central Directorate, the most tangible and worrying issue – also in terms of perceived safety – is represented by street level drug sale. It is a wide-spread phenomenon which cannot be curbed in an effective way also because of the restrictions for the use of pre-trial detention, as laid down by paragraph 5 of article 73 of the Decree of the President of the Italian Republic No. 309/90.

In order to strengthen counteraction, under certain circumstances, it is thus necessary to make use of legal instruments which are generally applied on more serious crimes, such as for example the undercover operations carried out by the Italian Investigative Units in agreement with the Judicial Authorities, which are aimed at proving the continued perpetration of a crime, making it possible to take more stringent precautionary measures.

In order to be successful, a double-track approach is needed, the fight against supply on the one hand and the eradication of the demand on the other, though the rehabilitation of drug addicts. To this end, public and private actors working in the social field are asked to operate in synergy, creating a horizontal network. Particular attention must be paid to prevention, with the extremely valuable support provided by the primary resources of education, i.e. families and schools.

Dott. Ammendola of the Antimafia District Directorate intervened asking for

possible estimates as to the drug lots which are not seized and as to the quantities of drugs entering the country. He added that another serious problem is represented by the pervasive corruption on more levels. He also stressed the difficulties met in carrying out interceptions outside Italy. The Anti-Mafia and Anti-Terrorism Prosecutor, Dott. Cafiero de Raho answered the question highlighting that the counter-activity carried out at the national level has been very effective thanks to the commitment of the Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities. As to the international scenario, Dr. Cafiero De Raho stressed that such complex and wide-ranging investigations are ensured by the Joint Investigation Teams and that the European Investigation Order is an instrument to be used for a specific case and not for wider-ranging phenomena. The National Prosecutor also stated that the cooperation and skills of the law enforcement and judicial authorities operating in Italy is fully adequate, as shown by the huge seizures of drugs. The Prosecutor also pointed out that the rapid information sharing at the international level between the Judicial and the Law Enforcement Authorities undoubtedly allows to carry out an effective drug fight. Within this framework, mention must be made of the Palermo Convention on transnational organized crime which encourages countries to harmonize their legislation in order to remove barriers. Lastly, Dottor Nicola Gratteri, Public Prosecutor in Catanzaro intervened mentioning the important drug operations carried out in Italy and highlighting that the competence and skills of all the stakeholder involved is recognized at the global level.

The delegate from INTERPOL confirmed this statement, stressing that in these years Italy has proven to be a fully-prepared country in the field of international cooperation.



From left to right:

- Dr. Michel Arcand, Director General Royal Canadian Mounted Police (**Canada**)
- Dr. Fabio Espitia Garzòn, General Attorney (**Colombia**)
- Pref. Roy Farias Dee, Head of the Antinarcotics and Organized Crime Prefecture (**Chile**)
- Dr. Federico Cafiero De Raho, Anti-Mafia and Anti-Terrorism National Prosecutor (**Italy**)
- Dirigente Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza Giuseppe Cucchiara, Director of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services (**Italy**)
- Dr. Valerio Cataldi, italian television journalist, panel moderator (**Italy**)
- Dr. Lisa Garin-Michaud, Policy Analyst (**INTERPOL**)
- Dirigente Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza Francesco Messina, Director of the Central Anti-crime Directorate (**Italy**)

PANEL 5

JUDICIAL AND POLICE COOPERATION. LESSONS LEARNT AND BEST PRACTICES

moderator: Dr. Vincenzo Spagnolo, journalist

**ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF
AFGHANISTAN**

Deputy Minister for
Counter Narcotics
Ministry of Interior
Affairs,
H.E. Mohd Hashim
Aurtaq

**Afghanistan, a country
in the forefront of the
fight against opium
production and traffic:
strengthening
international
cooperation
perspectives**

It is unquestionable that opium cultivation in Afghanistan is a major problem. In 2019 good results were achieved in the fight against drug trafficking, which indeed is a global fight. Our successful operations increased by 4%, and our drug seizure increased by 139%. We also have an increase in the arrests of drug traffickers including some top-level members of criminal organizations, and in the amount of poppy cultivated areas. Illicit opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan is facilitated by different factors, including, in particular, the great difficulties met by the Government in controlling some areas of the country. The production increase was also connected to the high level of demand at regional and international level. Poverty, unemployment and analphabetism facilitate poppy cultivation and manufacturing.

Our big challenge is illicit import of precursors to Afghanistan from the countries of origin, which are used to process opium to obtain heroin or morphine.

As a result of the operations carried out by the Government against drug producers and traffickers, in comparison to previous years, in 2019 it was possible to better curb Afghan opium poppy production.

In order to combat drug trafficking, a five-year program was worked out by developing a roadmap aimed at gradually improving the results achieved so far.

Speech made in Afghan language. The Afghan text was then summarized and translated into English.

AUSTRIA

Head of Drug
Department, Brigadier
General Daniel
Lichtenegger

**Control of drug
deliveries by postal
parcels**

Austria is a relatively small country (9,000,000 inhabitants) if compared to the other countries represented here, hence the drug quantities seized are less than those quoted during many presentations. Cocaine, which comes from South America and arrives first in Europe and then in our country, is undoubtedly one of Austria's biggest problems alongside cannabis and synthetic drugs. Drugs traded through the darkweb and sent by postal parcels are another emerging issue. Although international cooperation at the investigative level has led to good results in the fight against drug trafficking, there are problems at the domestic level as to the capacity of the national legal system to keep pace with the different operational needs. In an initial phase, postal companies, mostly private companies, operating at the domestic level were reluctant to cooperate with the law enforcement authorities involved in the fight against the drug sale through the darkweb. Things have now changed.

In this connection, mention must also be made of another problem at the national level, i.e. only customs and not the police are authorised to open postal packages for inspection without an order from the public prosecutor.

In contrast, the customs authorities may inspect and provisionally seize the parcels, but are not allowed to conduct any further investigations and must

hand them over to the police.

In combating such a problem, great impulse has recently been given to targeted investigations which have allowed to identify many subjects selling drugs through the postal network.

Once senders and recipients have been identified the aim is to make the distribution channels unusable. In this connection the cooperation with the postal companies is crucial. In this way it is also possible to better control the distribution centres.

The counteraction can clearly be carried out only with the cooperation of the countries affected by this phenomenon, such as Germany, the Netherlands and Italy but, as already said, the obstacle is represented by the different judicial cooperation approaches since each country has its own legislation. Hence the need to analyze and understand the different legal systems and their features above all in terms of counteraction. The presentation ends highlighting the importance of the campaigns for the dissuasion of drug addiction.

IVORY COAST

Director of the Narcotics
and Drugs Police,
Dr. Mabonga Toure
Atchet

After thanking participants, the delegate of the Ivory Coast recalls the attention to the role played by Africa as a drug stockpiling and transit country. Only a very small part of the drugs traded by criminal syndicates is distributed in the African continent. Most part of the drugs reaches Europe, in particular Italy, Spain, Germany and France through sea routes. Other consumption markets of the drugs transiting Africa, in particular the Ivory Coast are: North Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia) the Middle East, Israel, Lebanon, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. Since most part of the drug is transported by sea routes and considering that the Ivory Coast does not have adequate technical equipment to intercept such carriers, international cooperation is crucial, both with a single country and with international organizations, such as INTERPOL.

Above all, in the last years the investigations supported by international cooperation have led to a series of huge drug seizures. As a result, at present, the drug loads in transit are identified mainly on the basis of the targeted reports made by the Liaison officers rather than through the electronic means used by African law enforcement authorities, that are unfortunately inadequate. Undoubtedly, the fight against drug trafficking is a primary goal if we consider the huge repercussions on the civil society in terms of corruption, risks for the health and public safety, infiltration in the illicit markets and terror financing. In order to improve the effectiveness of the fight against the phenomena connected to drug transit it is of primary importance to invest in high-tech means, specialized training in favor of law enforcement authorities and international cooperation.

GERMANY

Deputy Head of Drugs
Department at
Bundeskriminalamt,
Dr. Michael Dewald

Concerning drugs Germany is mainly a consumer and a transit country. Production of (synthetic) drugs only happens on a small scale. But: In recent years also large-scale-production sites (for amphetamine) have been detected. Drug trafficking proceeds are very high.. Only a relatively small amount is seized and confiscated.

Drug seizures are very important. What is needed, in addition, is a much stronger concentration on the proceeds of crime. Such "dirty money" does not

The role and
penetration of
organized crime in drug
transit and
consumption: evidence

and trends

only make criminals rich, but it is reinvested in drug trafficking and, even worse, in legal markets, significantly altering them.

As to the illegal market that is developing on the Internet/Darknet, Germany recently has published a study proving that because of the high profit margins trade via Internet/Darknet is very attractive for OC. The *darkweb* is difficult to tackle, also because traffickers use encrypted communication systems that make wire-tapping hard.

As mentioned before, there is another challenge: the fight against the huge flows of money deriving from trafficking, laundered through credit institutions or “tax havens”. Therefore, the only way to cope with the new frontiers of organized crime, that, in such scenario, is assisted by the use of *bitcoin* and encrypted communications, is to make stronger and more systematic efforts to enhance international cooperation and information sharing among Police Authorities.

ITALY

Assistant Prosecutor at
the Anti-Mafia and
Anti-Terrorism
National Directorate
Dr. Giovanni Russo

Drug trafficking is, by its nature, a transnational crime, since the drug market has a worldwide scope (according to recent estimates, drug abusers are 290 millions in the world). For this reason, advanced cooperation is the only way to effectively fight against it.

Status of judicial
cooperation

In the fight against drug trafficking, judicial cooperation has clearly revealed to be more slowly than police cooperation.

Each country has its own set of rules, but sentences must be acknowledged and transposed by other countries, in order to be implemented.

In this context, the fact that a particular conduct can be considered a crime in a country and not in the others, can cause difficulties. Therefore, for a better cooperation, judicial assistance must be eased and, in the framework of a more and more effective information sharing, the coordination between the Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities of the countries involved must be fostered. In this regard, I would like to mention a recent example of cooperation between Italy and Ivory Coast. In this case, without a Memorandum of Understanding, but only on the basis of mutual trust and information sharing, very good results were obtained and large quantities were seized.

The results obtained confirm that information exchange and shared joint actions are the only effective counteraction tools.

This concept is also proven by the excellent information exchange conducted by DCSA, also through the Law Enforcement Attachés network working in different countries.

Furthermore, Joint Investigation Teams are undoubtedly an effective operational instrument. They are composed of members of the Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities working in this area. About 90% of such teams, which were set up with the assistance of EUROJUST, are involved in the fight against drug trafficking. Furthermore, such a tool can also be used out of Europe, as envisaged by the Palermo Convention.

Other important instruments are the Antidrug Operational Memoranda and the Protocols of Understanding that, along with the Treaties between States, facilitate information sharing.

In recent years, further technologies assisting investigations have been

developed, among which, I would like to mention a project supported by the DNA (the Anti-Mafia and Anti-Terrorism National Directorate)and the Pavia University (together with DCSA): the molecular profiling of seized drugs that, after identifying the univocal characteristics of a drug shipment, is able to effectively establish its geographic origin.

It is then absolutely necessary to strengthen cooperation, joint activities and develop new and increasingly specialized investigation tools using the most advanced technologies.

ITALY

Director of the
International Police
Cooperation Service,
Brigadier General of the
Carabinieri
Giuseppe Spina

**SCIP as national contact
point in international
cooperation**

The Director of the International Police Cooperation Service [SCIP] in his speech agreed on the need to carry out a rapid and complete information sharing among police agencies at international level, for an effective fight against drug trafficking. This specific activity is carried out at national level by the SCIP, which was set up in 2000, by fusing together different offices dealing with international police cooperation. The SCIP, as a multi-agency service, is the structure joining all national police forces working together in this specific field.

The SCIP is the national contact point for the information exchange and the police cooperation at international level, from and towards Italy, given that the following offices are part of it: Interpol National Central Bureau, Europol National Unit and the S.I.Re.N.E. Office (Supplementary Information Request at National Entry), as well as other important international cooperation platforms, among which ARO (Asset Recovery Office) and ENFAST (European Network of Fugitive Active Search Teams).

The International Operations Room(SOI), that is a sort of front desk for the domestic and foreign police bureaus, is a fundamental part of the SCIP.

The core of international cooperation is to quickly disseminate the information stored in the data bases. This is a primary and rapid form of police data and information exchange and an effective instrument of support to the investigations.

The project that Italy realized in 2016, enabling the interoperability between the national and Interpol data bases, led to an exponential increase (from 3,000 to 40,000,000 per month) in the queries, that in a three-year period, brought about a growth of 74% of the arrests of foreigners in our country.

This confirms that nowadays and in the future, the fight against crime and drug trafficking criminal organizations goes through international cooperation activities and an increasingly rapid and effective exchange of information for intelligence purposes.

USA

Director Bulk Cash
Smuggling Center of
Homeland Security
Investigations,
Dr. Albert Giangregorio

**Online undercover
operations**

The undercover operations in the USA are a very effective investigative instrument: through them it was discovered that in online drug trafficking and the consequent money laundering, the criminal organizations are increasingly involving third parties, in particular professionals such as lawyers, accountants and realtors.

In the last few years, the Chinese market is another crucial problem: among the others, it has developed systems to elude controls on capitals.

Organized crime, which also moves capitals by using crypto-currencies, penetrates all the grey areas within the legal framework of individual countries.

In particular, in the USA, they utilize alternate value systems such as prepaid cards and crypto-currencies to launder proceeds from their illicit business. The use of these systems often present law enforcement with additional identification and enforcement challenges as regulation, legislation and financial industry compliance are still developing in these emerging markets.

As to the operations with crypto-currencies, they are controlled in the USA through a specific software whose aim is to identify and combat money laundering.

Considering the lack of Internet physical borders, the international cooperation appears to be really vital. Undercover operations represent a necessary and critical component to successfully dismantling Transnational Criminal Organizations. These operations must take into account the financial aspects of the organization, to include the placement, layering and integration of the illicit proceeds that perpetuate the criminal cycle.

Dr. Cozzi of the DDA (Anti-Mafia District Department) in Genoa briefly takes the floor speaking about the huge seizures of cocaine made at Genoa Port, in cooperation with the Drug Enforcement Administration [DEA] and under the coordination of DCSA and EUROJUST. This operation also led to the seizure of € 935,000 euro: this sum had to be used to corrupt personnel of different institutions, who were instead undercover agents. The above-mentioned investigation has proven again that in order to identify and block assets and financial resources of organized crime groups the exchange of information must be prompt and effective.



From left to right:

- H.E. Mohd Hashim Aurtaq, Deputy Minister for Counter Narcotics Ministry of Interior Affairs (**Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**)
- Brigadier General Daniel Lichtenegger, Head of Drug Department (**Austria**)
- Dr. Mabonga Toure Atchet, Director of the Narcotics and Drugs Police (**Ivory Coast**)
- Dr. Michael Dewald, Deputy Head of Drugs Department at Bundeskriminalamt (**Germany**)
- Dir. Gen. Di Pubblica Sicurezza Giuseppe Cucchiara, Director of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services (**Italy**)
- Dr. Vincenzo Spagnolo, journalist, panel moderator (**Italy**)
- Dr. Giovanni Russo, Assistant Prosecutor at the Anti-Mafia and Anti-Terrorism National Directorate (**Italy**)
- Brigadier General of the Carabinieri Giuseppe Spina, Director of the International Police Cooperation Service (**Italy**)
- Dr. Albert Giangregorio, Director Bulk Cash Smuggling Center of Homeland Security Investigations (**USA**)

PANEL 6

TRAFFICKING AND DYNAMICS IN CRIME GROUPS: CONTRAST ACTIVITIES. COMBATING DRUG TRAFFICKING CRIME GROUPS

moderator: Dr. Francesco Grignetti, journalist

ITALY
Commander of the
Central Organised Crime
Investigation Service,
Brigadier General of the
Guardia di Finanza
Alessandro Pio Barbera

**Financial Investigations
to dismantle drug
trafficking criminal
organisations: lesson
learned and good
practices**

Financial investigations are fundamental in the fight against organized crime, that gains huge profits from drug trafficking.

There is a great interest for drug trafficking and for all the phenomena connected to it. But today, a strong investigative effort must be addressed, more than in the past, towards financial investigations linked to the laundering of the money gained from such traffics.

Adam Smith's theory, according to which crime does not produce wealth, proved wrong: criminal activities produce great wealth and, as a consequence, create job opportunities, which inevitably produce social consensus.

Therefore, the character of the "Mafioso" is not the conventional one he had in the past. He looks like a person who, laundering the money derived from criminal activities, provides job opportunities opening firms, businesses, activities in general but, at the same time, surreptitiously modifies the fair competition rules, causing harm to the social and economic development.

In this way organized crime is increasingly taking the shape of large-scale economic and financial crime. For this reason crimes like tax evasion should not arouse less social alarm than other crimes, since they are often used to launder money of illicit origin.

It is obvious that, the usual law enforcement activities must be supported by thorough economic-financial investigations.

Therefore, skilled officers who analyze financial reports of a business, recognize false invoices, read into money movements, should work side by side with the officers specialized in antidrug investigations.

As already mentioned by other speakers, another market to be thoroughly monitored is the crypto-currency market, through which large quantities of illicitly gained proceeds are moved.

Due to the globalization of the financial flows, all countries need now to operate altogether and unanimously, through cooperation, information exchange and intelligence at international level.

We can even seize tons of drugs, but if we do not stop the money flows of the criminal syndicates we will never put an end to such an endemic phenomenon.

COLOMBIA

Anti-Narcotics
Intelligence of the
National Police,
Lt. Col. Fabio Hoieda

The evolution of
cocaine trafficking and
the penetration
capacity of the new
criminal actors. From
Colombia to the EU

In the past, drug trafficking in Colombia was in the hands of few drug cartels, since 2009-2010 drug organizations have been changing their approach, redistributing and parcelling out their activities.

At present, drug organizations have diversified their activities and each group has its own task: drug production, illegal introduction at ports, drug concealment, drug deliveries and so on and so forth.

This new drug trafficking scenario has brought about the need to change the investigation methods so to identify the new and often “invisible” crime syndicates.

Since 2013 coca cultivation, and hence cocaine production, have been undoubtedly increasing.

In the past, European criminal organizations purchased the drug from Colombians living in Europe but since 2018 there has been a trend reversal.

More specifically, the organizations purchase the drugs directly in Colombia, having huge economic profits: one kilo of cocaine purchased in Colombia costs 1,500 Euros only but the same quantity in Spain costs 30,000 Euros.

The purchase of cocaine from producers on the spot guarantees higher cocaine purity, from which, in turn, it is possible to obtain more doses.

Up to 2014 most of the Colombian drug production was destined for the USA. Over the last years, about 60% of the cocaine produced in Colombia has been sold in Europe, with undoubtedly higher profits.

NORTHERN MACEDONIA

Director for Public
Security,
Dr. Sasho Tasevski

A country along the
Balkan route of drug
trafficking: current
situation

Transnational crime is a critical issue at international level, as it is drug trafficking.

For the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of North Macedonia the fight against drug trafficking is a priority and investigations target both the criminal organizations operating at transnational level and the distribution within the country.

North Macedonia is a drug transit area along the Balkan route and, at the same time, a storage hub for the drug that is later shipped to Western Europe and, through Bulgaria and Greece, towards Turkey.

The monitoring of the domestic trafficking trends revealed that marijuana is the most widespread drug in the country.

Cannabis cultivation in North Macedonia is not very significant, but, since the country is close to Albania, considerable quantities of this drug cross the North Macedonian borders.

As to heroin, that is more and more decreasing on the domestic market, the transit route has changed: it crosses Turkey towards Western European countries. Heroin enters Greece and Bulgaria, transiting through Serbia, Kosovo and Albania. The cooperation among North Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish criminal groups is still strong.

As to cocaine coming from South America, Belgium and other countries, an increase in consumption at domestic level was registered.

At the same time, North Macedonian citizens are increasingly involved in drug trafficking from South America to Europe. Recently, cooperation between North Macedonia and many European and South American countries, as well as with the U.S.A., has grown.

With regard to synthetic drugs, such substances are not very popular in the country at present, although lately a certain increase in the sales on the deep web and the dark web, by home postal delivery, has been registered. Therefore, international cooperation is still the path to be followed for a more effective response to the drug trafficking scourge.

MEXICO
Director of Intelligence
of the Secretary of
Citizen Security
Tlaxcala,
Dr. David Alberto
Izquierdo Sanchez
Hidalgo

**The Cartels and their
relations with the
European criminal
organizations**

In Mexico, where drug traffickers have a huge economic power and advanced technology, there are similarities with the Colombian situation.

In order to fight against criminal organizations, new strategies targeting the financial aspect are being developed, resorting to the same pattern used in the U.S.A. against the famous gangster Al Capone.

At present, in the country a financial “*Inteligencia*” is harmonizing the operational procedures of the 32 Mexican states, in order to identify and dismantle the economic-financial structure managing drug trafficking proceeds.

In Mexico an increase in the homicides linked to the drug and distribution phenomenon was registered. In the past, Mexico was essentially a drug transit and distribution country, while now it has become also a producer of new synthetic drugs, by using the precursors subject to diversion.

Also Mexico is observing a growing consumption of Fentanyl, a substance that is killing thousands of persons in the U.S.A., even if such phenomenon is not subject to a specific monitoring in the country yet, due to the lack of precise indicators. Several forms of cooperation with the USA, Colombia, Canada and other countries are ongoing, which are having good results in terms of seizures. Many difficulties are being encountered in the fight against synthetic drugs, since it is very easy to synthesize new and not classified molecules, that substitute those already identified and scheduled among prohibited substances. These new drugs are very dangerous, since they are highly addictive.

The increasing consumption of methamphetamines in Mexico generated a growth in the related crimes, above all car thefts. A survey conducted in the Mexican prisons revealed that out of 10 prisoners who committed this crime, 8 were consumers of such drugs.

In the country there are transnational crime groups having branches all over the world and making agreements with organizations from other countries, such as the ‘*ndrangheta*’.

Therefore, the fight against such synthetic substances could resort to specific groups of scientific experts, who can rapidly identify and classify the chemical substances circulating in the country, identifying at the same time those who are skilled to design and produce the molecules of such dangerous synthetic psychotropic substances.

The introduction of measures to trace precursors is likewise fundamental to fight against drug trafficking. Such measures are aimed at verifying if precursors are licitly used or diverted towards the illicit market.

However, prevention is the essential tool to fight against drug spreading, also considering that drug addiction could generate serious problems inside families, with an impact on the social stability.

SPAIN

Head of the Narcotics
Central Brigade UDYCO,
Comisario Antonio Jesús
Martínez Duarte

Detection and control
of hubs to combat
organized crime groups

International cooperation, both at judicial and police levels, is a well-established fact for Spain: thanks to cooperation numerous joint operations were conducted, involving several countries, such as North Macedonia, Italy, Argentina, Colombia, Bulgaria and many others.

In the past, in Spain many investigations were conducted into drug money laundering activities operated by foreign crime groups. Recently, this trend is changing. Currently, Chinese Colombian, Dutch, Moroccan and Albanian groups settled in Spain and use this country as a contact point for their illicit activities with the South American countries, in the hashish trade and, most recently, in that of cocaine. In this context, the Spanish criminal networks have specialized in supporting the criminal projects of the foreign organizations rooted in Spain.

The Chinese crime groups, which are specializing in the marijuana production, are trafficking this drug over the Spanish territory by postal consignments.

From the operational point of view, Spain heavily relies on international cooperation and facilitates extraditions and undercover operations as well as the prompt execution of the European investigation orders.

The interception of drug loads destined for Europe and crossing the Spanish territory is a very difficult activity since the criminal syndicates use different *modus operandi*, from the drugs transported inside containers on board large merchant vessels, to the use of small boats, from aircraft to submarines and semi-submarines.

As to hashish trafficking, there are important collaboration initiatives with Italy and Portugal leading to the detection of routes used to import this substance from Libya.

Methamphetamines have also registered a steady increase in illicit trafficking, above all since 2017 onward, as proven by the seizures of remarkable loads of these drugs from several countries, such as Mexico.

The Spanish delegate closed his presentation by affirming the need to promote and facilitate cooperation, emphasizing the importance of quick responses and of “special operations”.

USA

Drug Enforcement
Administration,
Dr. Scott Seeley-Hacker

The drug trafficking
dynamics in/through
the American Continent
and prominent
criminal networks

The USA is the greatest drug import and consumption country in the world. At present, the crime groups involved in drug trafficking use established networks that connect the producing and distribution countries in order to make their illicit business. Fentanyl use continues to spread globally and remains the most important problem in the USA causing approximately 70,000 overdose deaths last year.

Mexican, Dominican and South American crime groups are the main groups that are active all over the US territory. Lately, the law enforcement capacity has been severely put to the test by the speed in which the drug traffickers can produce narcotics, communicate, transport and sell narcotics as well as how quickly they can recover from law enforcement seizures. In fact, because what they are doing is illegal and not regulated they can often act freely without being subject to the restrictions of the legislation of the country where they operate. The DEA’s counter-narcotic strategies aim at destroying the top figures within the criminal organizations, dismantle the organization and to attack the organizations financial infrastructure. These activities all lead to reduce the drug

flows in the country and limit the damages caused by their illicit activities.

The DEA has programs to track the origin of cocaine and heroin using samples to build a library for comparison. This program is available to international law enforcement organizations such as Interpol. These programs can be used for intelligence activity and targeting, it would be desirable to share and compare these systems with their relevant good practices.

The USA has always given a great importance to international cooperation as proven by the wide network of DEA offices located all over the world. This is due to the fact that this is a global threat and for this reason there must be a global commitment. It is necessary to target and attack the criminal syndicates with their same timeliness through reducing bureaucracy, which sometimes hampers the cooperation between law enforcement organizations and countries involved. The USA extensively uses economic-financial investigations, following the capitals flows derived from drug trafficking, identifying the subjects involved and freezing their bank accounts. It is paramount to identify and dismantle not only the drug criminal networks but also the large-scale organizations behind them.

ITALY
Commander of the
Carabinieri Special
Operational
Department (ROS),
Major General of the
Carabinieri
Pasquale Angelosanto

**Transnationality of the
Italian organized crime:
emerging trends**

Drug trafficking is a very attractive business for all the Italian criminal organizations.

As already mentioned by other speakers, the “ *‘ndrangheta* ” avails itself of associates – brokers, who settled in South America, to directly negotiate on site the purchase of the drug consignments, in order to maximize profits.

The “ *camorra* ” has operational bases in the producer countries, where its representatives work as intermediaries with the cartels.

Recently, “ *cosa nostra* ” has shown a renewed interest in drug trafficking, aiming at regaining part of the profits lost, due to the incisive counteracting measures by the Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities.

The “*sacra corona unita*” is involved in managing the routes of the drugs coming from the Balkan area.

In particular, the *‘ndrangheta*, has increased its power, becoming the point of reference for the organizations managing the supply not only for Italy and Europe, but also for Canada and Australia. In this regard, important cooperation initiatives were realized with Canada, that led to the arrest of leading figures of the clans, staying in that country.

Also *cosa nostra*, for its drug trafficking activities, avails itself of contact men who are *camorra* and *‘ndrangheta* associates.

The *camorra*, that is undoubtedly suffering the fragmentation inside the organization, that did not allow the same results achieved by the *‘ndrangheta* in the drug trafficking area, is trafficking in different types of substances (the so-called poly-trafficking), establishing relations with the organizations also operating at European level, through its representatives.

Recently, a decrease in the counteracting capacity has been registered, in comparison to the past. This is mainly due to the already mentioned encrypted communications that make interceptions more difficult.

Lately, another problem has emerged: it is impossible to consider transnationality as an aggravating circumstance of the related crimes, when the



criminal organizations do not avail themselves of local groups , but utilize their own associates living in that country.

Dr. Bombardieri, from the DDA in Reggio Calabria took the floor at the closure of the panel. He pointed out that not all countries are proactive in increasing and accelerating information exchange with their counterparts. In reply to this, the Mexican and U.S.A. delegates referred that their countries are absolutely ready to carry out a quicker information sharing by strengthening the network.



From left to right:

- Lt. Col. Fabio Ojeda, Sectional Chief of Anti-Narcotics Intelligence of the National Police (**Colombia**)
- Major General of the Carabinieri Pasquale Angelosanto, Commander of the Carabinieri Special Operational Department (ROS) (**Italy**)
- Brigadier General of the Guardia di Finanza Alessandro Pio Barbera, Commander of the Central Organised Crime Investigation Service (**Italy**)
- Dr. Sasho Tasevski, Director for Public Security (**North Macedonia**)
- Dr. Francesco Grignetti, journalist, panel moderator (**Italy**)
- Dirigente Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza Giuseppe Cucchiara, Director of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services (**Italy**)
- Dr. David Alberto Izquierdo Sanchez Hidalgo, Director of Intelligence of the Secretary of Citizen Security Tlaxcala (**Mexico**)
- Comisario Antonio Jesús Martínez Duarte, Head of the Narcotics Central Brigade – Drug and Organised Crime Unit (**Spain**)
- Dr. Scott Seely-Hacker, Drug Enforcement Administration (**USA**)

PANEL 7

TRAFFICKING AND DYNAMICS IN CRIME GROUPS: THE LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES. INFORMATION FLOWS TO FOSTER ANTIDRUG ACTIVITIES AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

moderator: Dr. Francesco Grignetti, journalist

<p>ALBANIA Director Directorate Against Narcotics and Traffics, Dr. Bledar Çeliku</p> <p>Penetration capacity by Albanian crime groups. Evidence of their role in the global scenario</p>	<p>Albania signed many bilateral agreements on the fight against drug trafficking with different EU and Balkan countries.</p> <p>At the domestic level, cannabis is the most widely used drug, followed by heroin and cocaine. However, in the last three years cannabis production has been steadily decreasing in the country.</p> <p>Although the size of cannabis cultivation sites has decreased, the price has increased, reaching 800-1000 euro per kilo.</p> <p>As to cocaine and heroin Albania is still a transit country.</p> <p>The number of drug-related offences increased in the period 2015-2017 and then has decreased.</p> <p>Encouraging results have been achieved in the field of seizures also thanks to the cooperation with other international partners. As to Albanian crime it is worth mentioning that Albanian organizations have relations with other crime groups operating in many European countries, such as Italy, Turkey, Greece, Switzerland, Germany, France, Belgium and Spain.</p> <p>In order to consolidate their profits, Albanian organizations are also involved in other illicit activities such as crimes against the person.</p> <p>At the international level Albania closely cooperates with many countries and international organizations such as INTERPOL, EUROPOL and DEA; the agreement with Italy on aerial surveillance and mapping of production areas is an example of this operational synergy.</p>
<p>FRANCE Deputy Director Office Anti-Stupéfiants, Dr. Samuel Vuelta Simon</p> <p>The French experience: OFAST</p>	<p>Although the drug seizures have lately increased in France, drug trafficking does not show a significant decline: in fact we believe that the drugs seized are 10% of those entering our country. In this regard, the criminal police officers specialized in the fight against drug trafficking in France are 20% of the total staff.</p> <p>The drugs reach our country through the French ports, either concealed in large container ships, or on board small and medium-sized boats, or overland, from Morocco, via Spain, or in smaller quantities, carried by cocaine “body packers” coming from the French Antilles.</p> <p>The drug reaching France is partly destined for domestic consumption and partly for other Northern European countries.</p> <p>Lately, an increase in the heroin flows from the Balkan route has been noticed.</p> <p>Organized crime shows remarkable reorganization skills, in response to the countermeasures adopted by the Police Authorities.</p> <p>Encrypted communications are increasingly used and subjects with a lower criminal profile are more and more involved.</p> <p>In France, the antidrug structure, Office Anti-Stupéfiants [OFAST], was</p>

reorganized. Such Office supervises domestic and international operations, in order to combat the leading figures of the drug trafficking criminal organizations. It is composed of members from the Gendarmerie, the National Police and the Customs, closely working with the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Finance as well as the Navy and Security Services. To this purpose, a Central Office was set up, which coordinates all the Bodies involved.

Besides domestic synergies, international cooperation is being promoted through Agreements.

The adoption of the counteracting patterns used for terrorism would be beneficial to the effectiveness of the fight against drugs. The in depth analysis of this phenomenon will allow to combat its different aspects: trafficking, criminal organizations and assets.

Since many leaders of the criminal organizations under investigation live abroad, cooperation and information sharing at international level are fundamental for the success of antidrug operations, in order to ensure mutual assistance and trust.

NIGERIA

Director National Drug
Law Enforcement
Agency, Dr. Muhammad
Mustapha Abdallah

**Dynamics and situation
of the Nigerian criminal
organizations networks**

Cooperation, as already mentioned by the DEA, is essential for Nigeria to acquire good practices in the drug trafficking sector. Nowadays, Nigeria is not only a transit country of large quantities of cannabis towards consumer countries; at present, a considerable increase in consumption was registered, with a high percentage of population abusing drugs such as marijuana, tramadol, cocaine and, to a limited extent, heroin. Furthermore, the country has also become a methamphetamine producer. Nigeria has recently succeeded in dismantling, in cooperation with the DEA, a laboratory producing amphetamines at a hectic pace. Nigerian crime was supported by the Bolivian and Mexican crime that shared the methamphetamine production techniques. These Nigerian organizations have then established their own branches, as we know, in many other countries, including Italy. At the beginning, our agency had only a staff of approximately 5,000 members involved in the fight against drug trafficking. Now, the number of officers has doubled. In the framework of the fight against drug trafficking, also large quantities of precursors, including ephedrine, were seized in Nigeria. In order to counteract as much as possible this alarming phenomenon, the country, in synergy with all partner countries and the international organizations involved, is ready to carry out the seizures ordered within any judicial procedure.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Deputy Chief of the
Main Directorate for
Drug Control,
General Sergey
Savochkin

**Information support to
partners: timeliness as
a successful tool**

At present in Russia, on the one hand, there is a decrease in the traditional drug spread and, on the other hand, an increase in the availability of synthetic drugs, like methylephedrine, mephedrone, MDMA and amphetamines that are progressively replacing the herbal illicit drugs, although there was also a rise in cannabis plants cultivation in south and east Russia.

In 2019, several tons of drugs were seized in Russia, thus proving the large quantity of drugs circulating within this country. The flows of these

substances are clearly identified at domestic level. For example, heroin reaches Russia through the Northern Channel while other illicit drugs come from India, Singapore and Moldova.

As to the illicit online trade, Russia has an intense monitoring activity on online operations and trafficking.

Numerous seizures of synthetic drug shipments were made at Russian entry border points, coming from Germany, Spain, Czech Republic, China, USA and Peru.

Moreover, several clandestine laboratories for the manufacture of huge quantities of Alpha-Pyrrolidinopentiophenone [Alpha-PVP] and mephedrone were detected and dismantled.

Among the counter-narcotic actions it is essential to foster the investigations on precursors and invest in new technologies allowing the monitoring of movements made by the haulage companies. However, due to major controls made by the Government on precursors and pre-precursors movements, the drug trafficking crime groups are adapting to the new situation, using new and non-controlled substances to manufacture drugs. In order to combat these new criminal strategies it is necessary to strengthen the monitoring activities on precursors and include the new compounds in the Tables of controlled substances, also providing for specific licenses for their use.

In Russia, like in many other countries, the online trade on the dark web is spreading: this illicit activity is also possible thanks to the use of cryptocurrencies during the illicit transactions.

"Hydra" is an example of illegal digital platform allowing high profits with online drug trafficking: 7 million dollars movements were registered on this platform. Numerous interdiction measures were issued in order to counteract this platform. The Russian police have also identified, besides the above-mentioned clandestine laboratories, small shops which produced and sold many illicit substances.

From international cooperation point of view, Russia is committed to several ongoing collaboration activities with various countries.

SPAIN
Head of the Criminal
Intelligence Unit of the
Civil Guard,
Colonel Antonio Cortes
Ruiz

**Information exchange
capacity as a tool to
reduce gaps**

Three obstacles have traditionally stood between the police investigator and the information he needs to carry out his investigation: legal, technological and organizational. While significant progress has been made in the first two sectors, the last one still stands between the potential user of the information and the source of the information.

As to this last barrier, which is neither legal nor technological but rather organizational, the concept of Single Point of Contact, sponsored with singular interest and commitment by the EU, stands as a lifeline. The SPOC, as it is known, is a model based essentially on three pillars:

- firstly, a multi-agency organisation, with a balanced representation of all bodies with competence in security matters, working side by side towards a common goal.
- Secondly, centralized access, through a single entry-exit point, to all channels, platforms and instruments of international police cooperation:

international organizations such as INTERPOL; EU agencies like EUROPOL, EUROJUST or FRONTEX; databases, national or European; Police and Customs Co-operation Centres; Liaison Officers from each country deployed abroad to other police forces, international bodies or fusion centres (i.e. MAOC-N, JIATF South, CeCLAD-M and OCRTIS Martinique, all of which are highly relevant to the fight against drug trafficking).

- Thirdly, a single messaging and case management system, with the ability to track all steps followed by a request for information exchange or operational cooperation, regardless of the channel through which it entered or left and, most importantly, with the possibility of interacting in an automated manner with the databases of all the agencies represented in the SPOC or its coordinating bodies, in order to optimize resources, avoid overlapping and identify which of them is best placed to deal with the request received, thus promoting.

TURKEY

Deputy Head of Counter
Narcotics Department,
2nd Degree Police Chief
Erdem Koç

Due to its geographical location and young population, Turkey is among the countries directly affected by drugs. Turkey is a transit and target country in terms of trafficking of heroin produced in Asia and as well as trafficking of synthetic drugs produced in Europe.

**Controls over
consignments in
transit: circulation of
information on carriers**

Turkish National Police has realized many reforms to further its well-known counter narcotics capacity as of 2015. The Sub-Division within the Department of Anti-Smuggling and Organized Crime was transformed as a separate agency under the name of Counter Narcotics Department of Turkish National Police to improve the response to the drug related crimes and criminals both at national and international level.

Provided that it is certain that the Balkan route is still important, the strategic role played by Turkey in the fight against drug is evident.

A new Training Academy in this specific sector was established within Counter Narcotics Department to provide training not only for Turkish law enforcement but also for foreign law enforcement agencies.

A wide range of trainings are provided to improve the skills of law enforcement personnel in the following specific areas: risk analysis, airport search techniques, synthetic drugs and clandestine laboratories, investigative techniques and identification of trends.

Furthermore prevention projects aimed at raising the awareness of population posed by illicit drugs are also conducted.

ITALY

Head of the III Service
"Drug Operations" of
the Central Directorate
for Anti-drug Services,
Brigadier General of
the Carabinieri
Riccardo Sciuto

During these days, we have talked many times about *co-sharing, co-working* and the importance of the information flow, stressing its characteristics.

Any type of information is fundamental for the related investigative activities that are developed both at operational and statistical levels.

DCSA collects the information sent by all Law Enforcement Agencies bureaus in Italy, the Law Enforcement Attachés posted in numerous foreign countries and by the foreign Liaison Officers working in Italy.

**Characteristics of
information flows and
operational analysis of
information**

DCSA *mission* consists in collecting and analysing information coming from all bureaus in Italy, international agencies as well as the counterparts of the partner countries and returning, in the same way, further information, to

the advantage of the large scale counteracting activities.

The analysis of the data provided by the information flow is of major importance since, besides fostering the development of investigations, can bring to light existing problems and possible investigative overlaps.

This is very important, both to avoid possible risks for the operators and to obtain the best possible result in ongoing operations.

This is also convenient, since it enables the Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities of different countries that are involved in the same investigation, to meet together and effectively cooperate.

This is the case, for instance, of the so-called “activations”, where promptness is of central importance, when there is the need to report to the operating officers the imminent arrival of a drug load.

As other delegates have already said, any type of cooperation is based on trust among the actors involved, since the information is valuable, not because we merely have it, but because we share it.



From left to right:

- Dr. Bledar Çeliku, Director Directorate Against Narcotics and Traffics (**Albania**)
- Dr. Samuel Vuelta Simon, Deputy Director Office Anti-Stupéfiants (**France**)
- Brigadier General of the carabinieri Riccardo Sciuto, Head of the III Service “Drug Operations” of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services (**Italy**)
- Dr. Muhammad Mustapha Abdallah, Director National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (**Nigeria**)
- Dr. Francesco Grignetti, journalist, panel moderator (**Italy**)
- Dirigente Genereale di Pubblica Sicurezza Giuseppe Cucchiara, Director of the Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services (**Italy**)
- General Sergey Savochkin, Deputy Chief of the Main Directorate for Drug Control (**Russian Federation**)
- Colonel Antonio Cortes Ruiz, Chief Criminal Intelligence Unit of the Civil Guard (**Spain**)
- 2nd Degree Police Chief Erdem Koç, Deputy Head of Counter Narcotics Department (**Turkey**)



OUTCOME DOCUMENT

OUTCOME DOCUMENT

(unanimously approved at the end of the meeting)

The representatives of 56 Countries and 6 leading international and regional Organizations, gathered in Rome, Italy, from 20th to 21st of February 2020, for the international Meeting entitled: “Antidrug policies: prevention of and fight against the drug phenomenon and international drug routes. Cooperation strategies in combating drug trafficking”,

having regard to the Political Declaration and the Action Plan on Drug, adopted at the High Level Segment of the 52nd Session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), held in Vienna in 2009, as well as the Final Declaration, adopted at the conclusion of the 30th Special Session of the UN General Assembly on the World Drug Problem, held in New York in 2016;

given the need that all actions aimed at reducing the demand and combating the supply of narcotic drugs are taken in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international law, while fully respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the principle of non-intervention in a State’s internal affairs;

considered that the illicit drug trafficking and drug spreading continue to represent a global risk to human health, safety, well-being and quality of life as well as to the legal economy, stability and security of the States;

aware that the world drug threat represents a common challenge that must be tackled jointly and in a multilateral context, through a global, multi-disciplinary, balanced and scientific evidence-based approach, with the ultimate aim of promoting the protection of the Communities, families, young people and society as a whole;

conscious that the fight against drug trafficking still represents the primary and more effective instrument to combat organized crime, which identifies in the proceeds derived from this illicit activity, the main source of financing to achieve its criminal purposes and remains the main tool to tackle one of the most pervasive and brutal criminal phenomenon of our times;

recognizing that drug trafficking is a transnational crime, of global importance, from which no country can consider itself safe and that to combat this threat more and more effectively it is essential to join forces, support the development of international investigations, exchange and share information, so to enhance the investigation and information efforts of each Country and further strengthen the quality of the information available;

considered the need to attack the assets and wealth, accumulated by the drug trafficking criminal networks using patrimonial, financial and money laundering investigations, where the domestic legislation so permits, by promoting investigations aimed at identifying the financial structures supporting this illicit activity, detecting and targeting the financial flows and the economic resources that allow the organized crime groups to further develop and widen their drug trafficking activities;

considered the need for a more effective judicial and police cooperation aimed at improving the quantity and quality of the information available and at further supporting the investigations carried out by the law enforcement agencies in their daily commitment to tackle international drug trafficking;

given the need to enhance the operational cooperation between the law enforcement agencies of producing, transit and consumer countries in order to promote increasingly broad and effective synergy both in terms of analysis of the phenomena and of the intelligence, so to develop common and shared preventive and repressive strategies, also encouraging the use of instruments such as bilateral and multilateral agreements, protocols of understanding, operational memorandums and rapid procedures;

given the need to carry out shared and joint operational procedures aimed at increasing coordination among law enforcement agencies by encouraging, when possible, technical support, the development and use of good practices based on the investigative experience and on the expertise, in favour of the countries more active in the fight against drug trafficking;

considered the urgent need to increase and accelerate, in the respective countries, the exchange of information and statistical data on the drug trafficking phenomenon, drug-related or psychotropic substances – related offences, chemical precursors, the results of the analyses carried out on the drug samples seized, drug production and manufacturing sites and methods, New Psychoactive Substances, routes and means used by traffickers, including concealing methods and the main techniques of drug analysis;

recognized the need to precisely geo-reference the places of production and origin of illicit drugs, to trace the importation routes and to better outline trends and trafficking analysis models with the objective to increase the drug flows interception capacity through the development of targeted and increasingly effective measures of analysis and counteraction;

acknowledged the need to deploy further efforts to the drug investigations into on-line marketplaces, in particular the web, the darknet and social networks in order to prevent and fight against the emerging phenomenon of the illegal drug trade in the virtual network, protecting particularly vulnerable people who are most at risk of the health and social harms associated with the use of New Psychoactive Substances;

we reaffirm our willingness to tackle the world drug problem and actively promote lifestyles and a society free of drug abuse in order to help people live in health, peace, security and prosperity;

we reconfirm our commitment to solve drug abuse-related problems which jeopardize public health, security and social living by pursuing the goals of the three international Conventions on drug control, in particular, human health and well-being, mainly young people, and our all-out war against drug-related crime;

we reiterate, at last, our firm determination to prevent drug diffusion and abuse and to counter drug illicit cultivation, production, diffusion and traffic.

Rome, 21 February, 2020

PHOTO ALBUM

























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I have the pleasure and I really must thank all those who, with their enthusiastic commitment contributed to the success of the Meeting. This gave Italy the opportunity to play a proactive and leading role and to strengthen its central position at international level in the fight against drug trafficking, through targeted discussions among the representatives of multilateral organizations and of the States more affected by the drug phenomenon.

I would like to express my special thanks to the Central Directorate of Immigration and Border Police, the Health Central Directorate, the Public Order Office, the Office for Technical and Management Services of the Secretariat Office of the Department of Public Security, and the Police Headquarters (Questura) of Rome. They, with the support of representatives of the Carabinieri Corps, the Guardia di Finanza and of the Local Police of the City of Rome, ensured a safe and smooth arrival of the national and international guests at the two main Roman airports, as well as their reception, transfer, stay and departure.

I would like to extend my particular thanks to the Public Relations and Protocol Office of the Secretariat Office of the Department of Public Security that, before, during and after the Conference, provided its valuable and appreciated support at technical level as well as in terms of personnel and expertise.

Last but not least, I would like to mention the personnel of the Central Directorate for Antidrug Services that, in providing their contribution, showed their excellent professional skills when fulfilling their burdensome administrative, organizational, documentary and graphic tasks. Said personnel also expressed their high-level public relations skills in assisting the participants.

At the conclusion of this complex work, that has been very important to our Central Directorate and also to me, I cannot help but pay tribute to the Dirigente Superiore of the Italian National Police, Mr. Emilio Russo, for his crucial role of coordination and to Colonel of the Carabinieri, Mr. Lucio Pica, for his detailed and faultless organization and realization of the event, that he followed step by step with enthusiasm and willingness.

Giuseppe Cucchiara



These Conference Proceedings are also available on <https://antidroga.interno.gov.it/>

Central Directorate for Anti-drug Services
Rome, February 20-21, 2020

ROME, 20-21 FEBRUARY 2020

NO DRUG NO PROBLEM

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS