



In The Name Of God
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**“The effects of Afghan narcotics in Central Asia”
(1996-2006)**

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Abstract:

Annually more people die from Afghan opium and its derivatives than from any other drug. Afghanistan produces over 90% of the world's heroin supply and that yields approximately 52% of the country's GDP; it is severely dysfunctional and beset by problems relating to weaknesses in both Central and Provincial Government which are compounded by systemic corruption at all levels and in almost all aspects of society. All the main opium and heroin trafficking routes lead out from Afghanistan across the world via neighboring states, such as Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Central Asia and other neighboring states. Attempts have been made in the present research to analyze the effects of afghan narcotics in Central Asia because Central Asia has recently emerged as a major international drug trafficking center.

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Chapter one

Theoretical foundation

1-1-Introduction:

In 1999 Afghanistan was the source of 75% of the global illicit opium production. Much to the surprise of the international community, following a Taliban edict in 2000 banning poppy growing, production fell from the 1999. In November 2001 the Taliban regime collapsed as a result of US-led military intervention and a western-supported Afghan interim administration was established in Kabul. There was initial optimism, following pledges of international assistance by western governments and statements from Afghan leaders promising a 'war on drugs', that the underlying dynamics of the opium economy could finally be addressed. However, that year Afghan farmers once more planted poppy in their fields and in 2002 3,400 MT of opium was produced in Afghanistan. (UNODCCP, 2002)

Iran, one of Afghanistan's immediate neighbors, has at least 2.5 million addicts despite major efforts to combat trafficking and faces the world's most serious opiates addiction problem. Central Asia is now a major consumer of Afghan heroin that has resulted in an HIV epidemic caused by injecting drug use. Central Asia is also extremely vulnerable to the activities of terrorist groups funded by drugs money. Theoretically vacancy of power and creation of no democratic and individualism in this area caused Central Asia to be transition rout to consumer markets. As that mentioned in hypotheses the illicit drugs pose a clear danger to the security of states, societies and individuals in this region. The main reasons for involvement in drug trafficking is the lack of good governance, porous regional borders and strengthening of control along the Iranian and Pakistani borders. These are more important reasons that international drug traffickers took a strong interest in the region. Furthermore passing the narcotics through Central Asia has impact that following cases are of them.

Political and economic instability and corruption, less productive economies with higher levels of violence, because of more resources are allocated to deal with drug-related problems. Another direct negative impact of the drug trade is the laundering of illegal proceeds and also drug is funding insurgency in Central Asia.

Undoubtedly the growth of heroin abuse through injection has contributed to the spread of the HIV/AIDS infection that this is another impact of drug trafficking in Central Asia. In this thesis I considered history of opium production in the world and Afghanistan, the role of the drugs in Afghanistan economy, the transit routes of narcotics and consumption markets and effects of drug trafficking in Central Asian states. I also tried to explanation the counter narcotics cooperation in Central Asia.

1-2-Framework of research:

As it is believed Afghanistan is the world's largest illicit opium producer. Central Asia, because of its geographic location and infrastructure has become a convenient trafficking corridor for drugs from Afghanistan to other countries. In addition, drug abuse in Central Asia seems to be very high. The reasons for the cases mentioned above could be divided to the following items:

- Power vacancy after collapse of communist government in the former Soviet Union.

Power vacancy as well as independency of states in Central Asia resulted in disorganization and uncontrollable transition of the opium in the region, especially in the border areas.

- Creating of no democratic and individualism in this area.

The scenario caused forming a kind of dictatorship in the states like Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan.

However producing more energy caused more funds and the result was increasing of poverty and a big gap between poor and rich people and also increasing of corruption.

The above mentioned problems along with unemployment caused increasing the daily expenses which made some people follow drug business. Consequently it helped the transition of the drugs in this area.

So the internal crisis of Afghanistan and inability of Afghan government to control opium production on the one side and border controlling problems in Central Asia countries on the other side caused Central Asia to be one part of drug abuse area and transition to Russia, Europe, USA and Canada.

Consequently, trafficking of the drugs in the Central Asia affects the security of the countries.

1-3- Description of the problem:

Central Asia, because of its geographic location and infrastructure, has become a convenient trafficking corridor for drugs from Afghanistan, the world's largest illicit opium producer. Some imports from Afghanistan remain in the region. Therefore among the array of challenges facing the central Asian region, illicit drugs have since the mid-1990s gradually risen to prominence. With continuously increasing opium production in Afghanistan and an increasing share of that production transited northward through central Asia, the impact of drug trade on the region is only worsening. The implication of the drug trade is multi-faceted: through addiction, and related crime, it affects public health and social security.

Through its profit margin and sheer financial weight, it affects the economies of the region. By exacerbating and deepening political corruption and due to ensuing damage to the national and international legitimacy of governments, it affects political stability. Finally, through its role in the financing of terrorism and insurgency, it affects national security in the most basic, military sense of the term. (Osmonaliev, 2005)

1-3-1- Narcotics production in Central Asia:

Opium cultivation and production in central Asia is minimal, The Central Asian states are no strangers to drug cultivation and consumption, something that has made people at the grassroots level more willing to be drawn into the financial incentives of the drug trade. For example, Kazakhs traditionally served koknar, a drink consisting of a mixture of alkaloids of the opium group (morphine, codeine, narcotine, heroin, and dionine), along with hydrocarbon, protein, resin, oil, and pigments, during national and religious holidays or at funerals. Often guests would be sent home with small amounts of dry koknar, which was a sign of the wealth of the hosts.

Koknar was also universally used as a remedy for the loss of appetite, pains in the joints, and prolonged coughs. Opium was traditionally smoked, brewed, or processed into a beverage for celebrations, medicine, or daily use by Turkmen tribal groups.

Opium has long been cultivated in the region, and records of opium poppy cultivation in Kyrgyzstan go back to the 19th century. Opium production began to be used for medicinal purposes during the colonial period. At the end of the 19th century an opiates-producing pharmaceutical plant was opened in what is now Shymkent, Kazakhstan. In fact, the Kyrgyz continued

to legally grow opium poppy until 1974. Some 98 state and collective farms in Kyrgyzstan's Issyk-Kul oblast produced 80 percent of the total licit opium in the Soviet Union and 16 percent of the world's supply. Prior to WWII, the Soviet government used Indian seeds to cultivate cannabis that had a high concentration of the psychoactive tetrahydrocannabinol. The cannabis was used in production of industrial hemp fiber.

It is important to remember just how easy it is to conceal drug cultivation in the region. These countries have the right kind of terrain and climate for cultivating narcotics. Everybody admits that cannabis production is very widespread, although no one is willing to make its eradication a priority. Cannabis is an easy-to-produce and lucrative cash crop. (Brill and Udalova, 2000, p: 8)

But with over 99 percent of opiates in the region originating from Afghanistan About One- quarter of afghan heroin and opium destined for European markets is believed to be trafficked through the five central Asian countries. The illicit trade is having a serious social and economic impact on the region, including the spread of HIV/Aids.

Drug trafficking from Afghanistan through central Asia has expanded dramatically over the past many decades. Today Afghanistan accounts for an estimated three-fourths of the world's heroin supply with an increasing proportion of those drugs trafficked through the central Asian states of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan. Most of this supply is sent into European and Russian markets and sometimes to the U.S and Canada. An estimated 80 percent of the heroin seized in Europe and 95 percent in Great Britain, originates from poppies in Afghanistan, most of which is trafficked through central Asia.

In today's Central Asia, the transit of drugs is already a major problem that if unchecked seems certain to increase in severity. The Central Asian states inherited many of the preconditions for successful cross-border trade activities, both legal and illegal. All had been republics of the former Soviet Union, share a common Soviet identity, and speak a common language; most had numerous ties to people outside of their own republic, either through kin or by association. With the collapse of the USSR they inherited a well-established air and road communication system that links them to Russia and the West, as well as networks of personal relations with officials in a dozen different countries. The Soviet breakup also led to more open borders and freer foreign travel. Increased cross-border communications meant increased opportunity for drug smugglers to establish contacts with interested parties in the region. The cross-border cooperation, which was not totally new, had been a major factor in the beginning of the proliferation of drugs in the Soviet Union during the war in Afghanistan. (Brill and Udalova, 2000, p: 9)

The region was already becoming increasingly connected to the rest of the world during the Gorbachev period; since independence these connections have increased exponentially. In 1996, Turkmenistan opened a new railway line that connects it to Iran, and in 1998, a new road that linked eastern Tajikistan with China was inaugurated. The number of direct flights between the region's main cities and the outside world has also increased.

Along with the newly independent countries came new borders that had to be patrolled and new border guards who had to be trained. These new borders remained virtually transparent until new national customs services

were created in 1993–1994. This was one of the reasons that international drug traffickers took a strong interest in the region.

The war in Tajikistan was another factor. A large portion of drugs that flow through the region enters via Tajikistan, which even before the war was Central Asia's poorest country. The pattern of cross-border ethnic relations has served as yet another powerful facilitator of the drug trade.

Tajikistan's ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks both have kin across the Afghan border, and these relationships have helped make the civil wars in one country the business of those living across the border. The sale of drugs is more than just an economic livelihood for individuals; it provides entire groups with the economic means to sustain themselves and to advance their political causes.

The geography of the region works to the advantage of drug traffickers. For example, the Kyrgyz border with Tajikistan is difficult to patrol since large parts of it are more than 13,000 feet above sea level and temperatures fall to -40 degrees Fahrenheit in winter. Only a few roads cut across the region, and until recently, they were all in bad repair. There is an irony to this inaccessibility. Anyone with a horse, any other pack animal, a helicopter, or a plane is effectively able to evade detection. This has made drug trafficking a pursuit of the well-connected (to military and security) as well as of the poor, while crippling those who take seriously enforcing the law. (Brill and Udalova, 2000, p: 10)

1-4- Key Questions:

1- What are the reasons of narcotics trafficking through the Central Asia?

2- What are the effects of Afghan narcoting trafficking on Central Asia when Pakistan and Iran decide to control the borders?

1-5- Hypotheses:

1- The Geographical location of Central Asia that positioned between the production and consumption areas of narcotics and instability of these states are reasons of narcotics trafficking through the Central Asia.

2- When Pakistan and Iran decide to control the borders, more narcotics pass through the Central Asia.

1-6- Methodology:

Methodology in this thesis is analytical and the findings of this thesis are based on primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include official documents, reports, and statistics. The secondary sources include articles, books, and internet sources. This thesis can be regarded as qualitative as opposed to quantitative. Although quantitative data will be used, this paper will rely heavily upon qualitative analysis.

1-7-Review of Literature:

Martha Brill Olcott and Natalia Udalova (2000) in their working papers” drug trafficking on the great Silk Road: the security environment in

Central Asia” write: geography and history make Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan attractive areas for drug traffic. These states are situated between the world’s largest illicit opium producers and the most lucrative markets in Western Europe. The countries border or are located in close proximity to the countries of the Golden Crescent and via China have access to the countries of the Golden Triangle, which are the world’s largest producers of illicit opiates.

Kairat Osmanaliev (2005) in his article “Developing Counter- Narcotics policy in Central Asia: Legal and political dimensions” writes among the array of challenges facing the Central Asian region, illicit drugs have since the mid-1990s gradually risen to prominence. With continuously increasing opium production in Afghanistan and an increasing share of that production transited northward through Central Asia, the impact of the drug trade on the region is only worsening. The implications of the drug trade are multi-faceted: through addiction, epidemics, and related crime, it affects public health and societal security. Through its profit margin and sheer financial weight, it affects the economies of the region. By exacerbating and deepening political corruption and due to ensuing damage to the national and international legitimacy of governments, it affects political stability. Finally, through its role in the financing of terrorism and insurgency, it affects national security in the most basic, military sense of the term. Presently, illicit drugs therefore pose a clear and present danger to the security of states, societies and individuals in this region.

Raphael f. perl (2001) in his report for congress” Taliban and the drug trade” writes: there is evidence that many terrorist organizations and some roué regimes pressed for cash rely on the illicit drug trade as a source of income. In the case of Afghanistan reports indicating that the drug trade is a

major source of income for the Taliban has received growing attention. According to some reports the regime uses poppy- derived income to arm, train and support fundamentalist groups including the Islamic movement of Uzbekistan and the Chechen resistance .There have also been allegation of Osama bin Laden's personal involvement in drug trafficking to finance al Qaeda's activities.

U.S. foreign drug policy currently focuses on reducing illicit drug supply to the United States, and only to lesser extent on denying funding to organized international criminal or terrorist groups. Should the latter objective receive greater priority, some policy and organizational realignment may be necessary.

Barnett R.Rubin (2004) in his article "road to ruin :Afghanistan's booming opium industry " writes the booming opium industry jeopardizes not only Afghanistan but also the united states , Europe and the entire volatile region of central Asia. Al Qaeda and the Taliban use drug money to finance their operations. Afghan warlords and militia fattening off of the drug sector create insecurity and block efforts by the national government to extend its authority. As the chairman of the house international relation committee, rep Henry Hyde, stated, the drug lords are getting stronger faster than the afghan authorities are being built up.

Nancy Lubin, Alex Klaitz and Igor Barsegian (2006) in their report network women's program "narcotics interdiction in Afghanistan and central Asia " write: The growing magnitude of narcotics cultivation in Afghanistan and trafficking throughout central Asia in the 1990s had spawned a wide range of policies and programs on the part of western governments and international donors. In the last decade, tens of millions of dollars were allocated to provide training and equipment and to support institutional

development and other efforts deemed critical to addressing the problem of narcotics cultivation and trafficking.

Nicole j. Jackson (2005) in his paper “the trafficking of narcotics, arms and humans in post- soviet Central Asia: perceptions, policies and realities” Writes post soviet Central Asia is not a major producer of narcotics, but over the past decade it has become widely perceived as major transit route for narcotics from Afghanistan moving towards Russia, Eastern and then Western Europe. This flow of illegal narcotics through post soviet Central Asia is a relatively new phenomenon largely because borders were closed under the soviet regime. Traditionally most of the drugs from Afghanistan were transferred through the open Iranian border and trafficked along the Balkan route. Over the past decade traffickers have found easier and more accessible routes to Europe through the weak and corrupt central Asian states and the flow of drugs crossing these states has steadily increased – particularly with the defeat of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001 and many other resources that will use in this dissert.

1-8- Main concepts:

Afghanistan, Central Asia, Trafficking

1-8-1: Afghanistan:

The Islamic republic of Afghanistan is a landlocked country in south-central Asia. It is variously described as being located within central Asia, South Asia or the Middle East. Afghanistan bordered by Iran to the west and Central Asian countries to the north and Pakistan to the east and south.

Afghanistan meaning land of the Afghans has been an ancient focal point of the Silk Road and human migration. The country is at an important

geostrategic location, connecting east, south west and central Asia. Afghanistan is landlocked and mountainous, with plains in the north and southwest. The highest point is Nowshak at 7,485m above sea level. The climate varies by region and tends to change quite rapidly. Large parts of the country are dry and fresh water supplies are limited. The endorheic sistan basin is one of the driest regions in the world. ("History of Environmental Change in the Sistan Basin 1976–2005").

1-8-2: Central Asia:

Central Asia is a region of Asia from the Caspian Sea in the west to central china in the east and from southern Russia in the north to Afghanistan in the south. It is also sometimes known as middle Asia or inner Asian is within the scope of the wider Eurasian continent. Central Asia is a landlocked area of continental Asia comprising of the five former soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan other areas are often included such as Mongolia, Afghanistan , northern-Pakistan , north- eastern Iran ,north-western India and western parts of the people's Republic of china such as Xinjiang.

1-8-3: Trafficking:

The word "trafficking" includes the word "traffic," which we often equate with transportation or travel. However, while the words look and sound alike, they do not hold the same meaning. (wikipedia)

Trafficking is a lucrative industry. It is now the fastest growing criminal industry in the world. Globally, it is tied with the illegal arms trade, as the