

**SPEAKING POINTS BY  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL BEKSULTAN SARSEKOV,  
DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN REGIONAL INFORMATION  
AND COORDINATION CENTRE, AT THE MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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The Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) was set up to co-ordinate the efforts of the relevant agencies of its member States to combat illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs.

CARICC's principal tasks are to:

- Assist in the organization and co-ordination of agreed joint international operations to combat transnational drug-related crime;
- Collect, store, protect, analyse and exchange information on cross-border crime connected with illicit drug trafficking.

The CARICC member countries are Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. At present, 11 countries (Afghanistan, Austria, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Pakistan, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) along with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) Regional Center for Combating Trans-Border Crime enjoy observer status with CARICC.

The availability of greater opportunities for collaboration with the SECI Center, whose membership includes 14 countries of South-Eastern Europe, and also with INTERPOL, which has National Central Bureaus in 87 countries, is a priority objective in developing international co-operation. On 2 June 2010, at the 33rd session of the Joint Cooperative Committee – the SECI Center's highest body – CARICC was accorded observer status with the SECI Center. An agreement will soon be signed between CARICC and INTERPOL that will significantly expand the possibilities for co-operation in terms of access to operationally significant information.

Observer States decide whether to assign liaison officers to CARICC. A representative of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration has already begun working with CARICC, while liaison officers have been appointed from Italy, France and Austria, and representatives from Afghanistan and Pakistan are expected to arrive soon.

In addition to the according of observer status, memorandums of co-operation and collaboration have been signed between CARICC and the SECI Center, the World Customs Organization, the Anti-Terrorism Centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the United Nations Development Programme in the Republic of Kazakhstan. A protocol on co-operation has been signed between the Regional Counter-Terrorism Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and CARICC. That document provides for a broad spectrum of co-operation to combat the financing of terrorism using the proceeds of the illicit traffic in drugs and will help to step up collaboration between these two international structures in countering terrorism and cross-border drug-related crime. In June of this year, letters of intention were exchanged to step up co-operation between the OSCE Secretariat and CARICC. A protocol on information-related collaboration has been prepared and signed between the CIS Bureau for the Coordination of Combating Organized Crime and Other Serious Crimes and CARICC. Co-operation is being developed with the European Police Office (Europol), the International Narcotics Control Board, the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Interagency Operations Coordination Center in Kabul, the Serious Organized Crime Agency and the trilateral initiative between Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan known as the Joint Planning Cell.

CARICC represents an excellent forum for the exchange of views by international experts. The Centre regularly holds international working meetings for the directors of the operational divisions of the relevant agencies in CARICC member States and other interested countries as well as for representatives of States enjoying observer status with CARICC and relevant international organizations.

The purpose of those meetings is to exchange information and organize joint international anti-drugs operations by the relevant agencies of interested States, including controlled deliveries as co-ordinated by CARICC. The first such meeting was held in June of this year at the CARICC headquarters in Almaty. The second meeting was held together with the SECI Center in Istanbul in October 2010. Representatives of the member States of CARICC and the SECI Center and their partners took part in these meetings. The participants examined possibilities for using CARICC's potential to co-ordinate multilateral international operations to combat illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, including controlled deliveries, the exchange of information and the identification of mechanisms for co-operation and channels for the exchange of information between interested parties.

Working meetings involving visits to CARICC member States have been held to step up practical work in closing down drug smuggling channels along the northern route and the North Black Sea route. Specifically, working meetings have been held this year with the directors of the relevant agencies in Astana, Baku and Dushanbe.

As regards the practical results of CARICC's activities, mention might be made of the fact that since 2008 the relevant agencies in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Ukraine have, with CARICC playing a co-ordinating role, discovered 21 international drug supply channels to destinations including Russia, Europe and China. This resulted in the detention of 39 leaders and active members of criminal groups and the seizure of 250.5 kilograms of heroin, 105 kilograms of opium and 15 kilograms of hashish of Afghan origin.

In view of its capabilities, CARICC has been given the task of co-ordinating the international Targeted Anti-Trafficking Regional Communication, Expertise and Training (TARCET) initiative aimed at closing down channels for the smuggling of precursors into Afghanistan. It should be mentioned that this operation, which was carried out with the participation of the relevant agencies in Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, produced tangible results in 2008 and 2009.

For example, in 2008, 6,885 kilograms of sulphuric acid and 1,600 litres of acetic acid, which can be used to manufacture acetic anhydride, were confiscated from illicit channels by the responsible agencies in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan during the operation. During the operation in Afghanistan, 1,000 litres of a mixture consisting of acetic anhydride and opium, 2,229 kilograms of ammonium chloride, 736 kilograms of sodium carbonate, 124 kilograms of activated carbon and 132 kilograms of other chemicals were seized. In 2009, 528 tons and 17,000 litres of precursors en route to Afghanistan were seized. In 2010, CARICC will co-ordinate the next stage of the TARCET operation. At the present time, CARICC has already taken its place as an operational and strategic analysis centre in Central Asia.

CARICC receives various information, including operational reports, regarding the results of investigations, checks, seizures and the like from the appropriate agencies of member States, observer nations and partners, data that are stored in its centralized database. Further, we are able, using the most modern methods, to conduct a prompt and strategic analysis that can then be used by our partners to interdict the drug trafficking channels.

At present, the Centre is funded under the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime project under which it was created. The project's donor countries are Canada, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Italy, Luxemburg, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

As the host country, the Government of Kazakhstan has made available to CARICC free of charge a building with a total floor space of 4,000 square metres and also, despite the global crisis, quickly allocated 2.7 million United States dollars for its complete overhaul. Kazakhstan's overall contribution amounts to more than 8.5 million United States dollars.

In addition, the United States Central Command has acquired and made available to CARICC equipment worth around 1.5 million United States dollars.

Today we can therefore certainly say that CARICC's capabilities go far beyond the co-ordination of the activities of the relevant agencies of the Central Asian countries in closing down the channels for the transportation of drugs in the region. The level of collaboration with partners and the Centre's potential could be used to an even greater extent.

Still, I wish to point out that, whatever they may be, the most modern means and methods and all local or regional initiatives are powerless to erect a reliable barrier against one of the most widespread threats of the modern age, namely the threat of narcotic drugs.

Real results can be achieved only by pooling the efforts of all State agencies, public, religious and other associations and ultimately the entire world community in this effort.

Thank you for your attention.