



UNODC
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AIRCOP



EU AND UNODC JOINT ACTION PROMOTING RULE OF LAW AND GOOD GOVERNANCE THROUGH TARGETED BORDER CONTROL MEASURES AT PORTS AND AIRPORTS

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UNODC continues its partnership with the EU through the launch of a **new initiative** aimed at fighting organized crime, by supporting more effective and coordinated responses to illicit trafficking at seaports, land border crossings and international airports in the Western Balkans.

In January 2020, under the framework of **the Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe (RP SEE) 2020-2023**, UNODC successfully initiated this EU-UNODC joint action promoting rule of law and good governance through targeted border control measures at ports and airports in South Eastern Europe. The action is implemented by the **UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP)** and **the UNODC-WCO-INTERPOL Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP)** in cooperation with **the RP SEE**

and is carried out in:

- ◆ **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (land border crossings Bijača and Gradiška and Sarajevo International Airport)
- ◆ **Montenegro** (port of Bar)
- ◆ **North Macedonia** (Skopje International Airport)
- ◆ **Serbia** (Belgrade International Airport)
- ◆ **Kosovo** under UNSCR 1244 (land border crossing Vermicë/Vrbnica).

The UNODC-WCO CCP's mission is to build capacity in countries/jurisdictions seeking to improve risk management, supply chain security and trade facilitation in seaports, airports and land border crossings in order to prevent the cross-border movement of illicit goods. CCP has been operating in South Eastern Europe since 2013 with Port Control Units (PCUs) established in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Kosovo under UNSCR 1244.

AIRCOP initiated its activities in the region in early 2020 along with the action. It applies passenger controls to supporting airports in tackling multiple threats, including all types of illicit drugs, illicit goods (such as wildlife, counterfeit medicines, weapons and others), as well as terrorism and trafficking in persons among others.

With these two complementary components, the action's **objectives** are:

- (i) to support more effective national and international responses to illicit trafficking through strengthening the current PCUs in the region and establishing new units, and;
- (ii) to strengthen the capacities of law enforcement agencies active at the mentioned international airports to detect and intercept high risk passengers in an effort to counter transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking and prevent terrorism.

The action supports the implementation of **the UN Conventions** on drugs and crime and **the EU Acquis**, notably Chapters 23 and 24 addressing serious organized crime, rule of law, good governance and security. The action **improves effectiveness** and **develops**

synergies between law enforcement actors at the national, regional and international levels and builds **bridges between various thematic areas, as well as between the Western Balkans and other regions**, im-

proving the security situation in **the Western Balkans and Europe as a whole**.

While the action is not directly assisting the Albanian authorities, the **work in Albania** in this field is ongoing and is supported by other sources.

UNODC DONATES EQUIPMENT TO THE AUTHORITIES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

October 2020, Sarajevo/Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina: UNODC handed over IT, basic search and protective equipment, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to the inter-agency Air Cargo Control Unit (ACCU) at Sarajevo International Airport and the PCU of the Gradiška land border crossing, consisting of members of the Indirect

Taxation Authority (ITA) and the Border Police of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The donation is part of the continuous support of the UNODC-WCO CCP in Bosnia and Herzegovina aimed to assist domestic institutions in establishing a sustainable inter-agency joint team working to reduce the risk of container misuse for the purpose of illicit commodities,

organized crime and other forms of illegal activities. UNODC strives to build capacity of the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina with a view to improve security in the licit economy, promote cooperation with the private sector and strengthen controls at state borders.

UNODC ASSESSES THE BELGRADE AIRPORT TO SUPPORT ENHANCED BORDER CONTROL IN SERBIA

5-9 October 2020, Belgrade, Serbia: UNODC conducted a technical assessment of the Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport in view of the establishment of the joint team composed of a Joint Airport Interdiction Task Force (JAITF) and an ACCU. The mission, which was previously postponed in March 2020 due to the

COVID-19 outbreak, has been carried out given the recent lifting of some of the COVID-19 restrictions and provided an opportunity to discuss the progress and future steps of the initiative during the meetings with the Ministry of Interior, Customs Administration, Ministry of Communication and Infrastructure and Directorate for Civil Aviation of Serbia as well as international stakeholders, including the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the OSCE. The meetings with the national and international counterparts in association with the technical assessment of the Belgrade airport helped establish a commitment to



the action and presented an opportunity to better address the foreseeable implementation steps, discuss administrative details and build relationships installing confidence on both sides and enhancing the cooperation at international level.



UNODC MEETS WITH THE NEW AMBASSADOR TO THE EUROPEAN UNION IN NORTH MACEDONIA

20 October 2020, Skopje, North Macedonia: In line with the continued UNODC-EU dialogue in the region, the Head of the UNODC Programme Office in North Macedonia met with the new Ambassador of the European Union in the country to discuss the cooperation in the region, including in the context of the UNODC Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe, the border control action as well as other UNODC initia-

tives. UNODC briefed the Ambassador on the overall framework of the UNODC-EU partnership and the progress and implementation of the said action to date. The Ambassador acknowledged the UNODC commitment to delivery at such a difficult time and pledged his support to the UNODC efforts in North Macedonia. The Ambassador also expressed interest in maintaining a strong cooperation, and potentially considering ex-

panding it to other areas within other UNODC programmes.



UNODC PROVIDES PRACTICAL TRAINING ON THE USE OF PRELIMINARY DRUG TEST KITS FOR BORDER CONTROL OFFICERS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

20 October 2020, Sarajevo / 30 October 2020 Gradiška, Bosnia and Herzegovina: CCP delivered a hands-on training on the use of drug identification kits, which were donated to the PCU at the land border crossing Gradiška and the ACCU at the Sarajevo



International Airport to further support the operational capacities of the Units. The training falls within the CCP training curriculum that follows the “Crawl-Walk-Run” approach - a staged training cycle delivered to PCUs and ACCUs worldwide. The hands-on training was delivered in cooperation with the Federal Police Directorate – Center for Forensic and Information Technology Support and its experts, who trained representatives from the Border Police of Bosnia and Herzegovina and ITA on the use of drug identification kits and other practical techniques required in field conditions. As part of the training, the participants were provided with

practical demonstrations on the use of the kits, allowing for their active participation.

The UNODC test kits, developed and produced by the Laboratory and Scientific Section, are intended to provide law enforcement officers with rapid and simple color tests for the preliminary field identification of drugs and precursors most commonly encountered in the illicit traffic. The high-end scales have multiple features and are a valuable tool in precision weighing, which is necessary for the precise measurement of the quantity of seized drugs.

UNODC HELD THE FIRST STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE BORDER CONTROL ACTION

22 October 2020, online: UNODC organized the first Steering Committee Meeting of the action in South Eastern Europe. The meeting was held online due to the COVID-19 restrictions, and was attended by key stakeholders of the action, including the Focal Points of the action, senior representatives from the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR); implementing partners of the action (WCO and INTERPOL) and the European Union Delegations in the region. This first session of the action's Steering Committee Meeting was moderated by UNODC and addressed by UNODC and EU senior officials in its opening session. In his opening remarks, the Head of Western Balkans Regional Cooperation of the DG NEAR provided the context for the EU engagement in the region, particularly in terms of economic convergence and stressed that economic development in the Western Balkans requires strong rule of law and that this joint action is instrumental in that

respect. Subsequently, UNODC provided an overview of the objectives and goals of the action, as well as an update on the implementation and status of activities including the impact on (border) security, foreign trade and its repercussions in the areas of international and regional cooperation; inter-institutional agreements; information exchange and dialogue between national stakeholders and partners to share good practices and experience; and cooperation with other relevant national stakeholders, donors and the private sector. The Governments' perspectives were heard with the addressed jurisdictions' updates on progress, successful operations in the framework of cooperation with UNODC and next steps within the action, specific to each jurisdiction and allowing to target priorities and tailor the project activities accordingly.

Finally, the action workplan for 2021 was discussed and is to be endorsed by end of 2020 by the national and local authorities of

the region as well as the EU to ensure coordination and synergy of efforts in the upcoming action implementation. The meeting concluded with an overview of the action's visibility work to date and future undertakings. The action's Steering Committee is aimed at providing specific guidance and support to the action as it allows for all the stakeholders to meet and discuss key issues aimed at reviewing the progress of the action and deciding on future undertakings. In



doing so, the national ownership of the governments in the region is ensured leading to greater coordination and coherence in the action implementation. The action Steering Committee meetings will be held annually.

UNODC ORGANIZED TRAININGS ON STRATEGIC TRADE AND EXPORT CONTROL IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND MONTENEGRO

26-29 October 2020, Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina; 2-5 November 2020, Bar, Montenegro: CCP delivered Strategic Trade and Export Control Trainings (STECT) for frontline officers of the PCUs at the land bor-

der crossing Bijača in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Port of Bar in Montenegro. The STECT is an intense training that explores the risk of non-state actors exploiting the containerized supply chain, as is regularly seen with

drugs and other illicit commodities, to traffic or deliver weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or their component parts, comprising chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) materials.

As part of the integral CCP training cycle for PCUs participating in the Programme, the STECT contributes to exploring the relationship between effective profiling of containers and its implications for the economy, and aims at building the capacity of PCUs to detect illicit trade within the containerized supply chain through the detailed examination of pre-arrival information. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, in addition to the officers of PCU Bijača, the training was also attended by a number of customs and law enforcement



officers involved in the Working Group on strategic and dual-use goods within the ITA, which was established to facilitate the work

of frontline customs and other relevant officers by providing guidance and support in matters related to strategic and dual-use goods. In Montenegro, the event was used to review topics and content introduced in the first STECT delivered in 2019 and also present new topics related to the proliferation of CBRN materials and explosives, as well as other challenging subjects, such as military hardware identification.

AIRCOP PARTICIPATES IN THE 4TH OSCE-WIDE SEMINAR ON PASSENGER DATA EXCHANGE

29-30 October 2020, online: AIRCOP participated in the 4th OSCE-wide Seminar on Passenger Data Exchange organized jointly by the OSCE and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) to discuss ways to responsibly use passenger data and promote the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2396 (2017), which focuses on preventing the return of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) by mandating States to adopt and use both Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) data systems. The objective of the event was to further support the

States in developing passenger data collection tools and provide opportunities to identify potential partnerships by focusing on several thematic areas, such as use of API/PNR for public health in times of crisis; building a Passenger Information Unit (PIU); collecting and analyzing the data along with collaboration with the CT Travel Programme and the related goTravel software. The seminar brought together over 150 passenger data experts and representatives from international organizations and the private sector who stressed the importance of information sharing, interagency cooperation and

the adoption of a risk-based approach aimed at fully integrating the civil aviation requirements with law enforcement needs in terms of border clearance. Several experts briefed the participants on legislative considerations and provisions for collecting and using passenger data for public health purposes. The event enabled the exchange of experience and best practices with OSCE and other partners with regard to UNODC mandate in this area in South Eastern Europe. AIRCOP contributed to the seminar by presenting its activities on border control at global level, including the current action.

UNODC BUILDS CAPACITIES OF THE BORDER CONTROL OFFICERS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND MONTENEGRO

16-18 November 2020, Bosnia and Herzegovina/Montenegro: CCP delivered a Joint Condensed Refresher Training for the officers

of the PCUs at the port of Bar and the land border crossing/customs point Bijača. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, the training was conducted in a hybrid manner

using an online platform combined with in-person attendance of participants at locations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

The three-day course presented to the PCU officers included topics related to smuggling modus operandi, updates related to container tracking, drug precursors and inter-agency and international cooperation. A

specific segment was dedicated to the issue of dangerous goods storage and security lessons learned from the ports in Tianjin, China and Beirut, Lebanon, and the devastating consequences in the case of latter.

The training was also used to discuss future training prospects for both PCUs and joint activities to be implemented over the course of 2021.

UNODC CONDUCTED A REFRESHER TRAINING FOR THE ACCU AT SARAJEVO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

2-3 December 2020, Bosnia and Herzegovina/Montenegro: CCP delivered an online refresher training for the officers of the ACCU at the Sarajevo International Airport. The training revisited modules and topics delivered during previous training events and presented new law enforcement materials and practices of the law enforcement structures



on successful prevention of smuggling and detection of illegal activities in air cargo opera-

tions. Delivered by the trainers from UNODC and WCO, the training was attended by the appointed ACCU officers comprised of the Border Police and the ITA of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as officials of the Sarajevo Airport Authority.

UNODC COORDINATES ACTION WITH THE EU PARTNERS IN THE REGION

9 and 11 December 2020, online: UNODC participated in the first Project Steering Committee meeting of the Countering Serious Crime in the Western Balkans – IPA 2019 (CSCWB – IPA 2019) project. During the meeting, the project team presented the initiative and its structure while the participants provided their perspectives on its implementation. It was also noted that the project will aim to avoid overlapping in the implementation of activities in the region and closely liaise with the relevant actors to further improve cooperation. UNODC's participation in the meeting was in line with the same goal of

coordination and identification of synergies. UNODC emphasized that it will continue to liaise with the CSCWB project to explore possible collaborations in the future. In the same token, UNODC met with the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) to discuss the respective initiatives in South Eastern Europe with the aim to ensure complementarity of capacity building actions in the region. During the meeting, the counterparts provided overviews on respective initiatives in the region and expressed readiness to cooperate in the spirit of non-duplication and synergy of efforts.

The counterparts agreed to continue updating each other on respective activities to avoid duplication of efforts and enhance complementarity of actions in the region. In addition to these coordination efforts, UNODC also maintains a close connection with the EU delegations in the region, notably through the provision of quarterly updates on activities in the spirit of information exchange and synergy of actions. Likewise, the EU delegations have been convened to and attended the first Steering Committee of the action.

UNODC STRENGTHENS SERBIA'S CAPACITY TO ADDRESS THREATS AT THE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS

7-10 December 2020, online: AIRCOP organized an online workshop on intelligence and risk-led approach to address threats at international airports for 13 experts and officials from the Ministry of Interior, the Customs Administration, and the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructures of Serbia. The event was attended by the UNODC Global Firearms Programme with a view to enhance synergies within the border control action. The workshop aimed to deepen the knowledge of the participants in intelligence and risk assessment as effective operational approach to tackle criminal organizations and

disrupt their networks; the operational environment and assessing the key elements for full integration of border clearance procedures in international airports; and learning how to adapt the law enforcement countermeasures against the rising threats impacting borders. The training outlined different operational scenarios and illustrated different border clearance methodologies, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses and raising awareness on the adoption of a risk-based approach against the threats posed by criminal organizations at international airports. The workshop, delivered in part-

nership with the Interpol Regional Counter-Terrorism Node for Eastern and Southern Africa (ESAF) and Europe, was conducted using the UNODC E-Learning platform. The participants had the opportunity to exchange ideas and thoughts using the live sessions integrated into the course with multiple questions/answers sessions and instant polls. The training also included a final comprehension test, the completion of which generated a certificate of attendance/proficiency for the trainees.

UNODC BUILDS CAPACITY OF NORTH MACEDONIA IN RISK-LED APPROACH TO ADDRESS THREATS AT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS

14-17 December 2020, online: AIRCOP organized an online training on risk-led approach to address threats at international airports for 50 participants from the Customs Administration and the Ministry of Interior of North Macedonia. The expertise on intelligence principles, risk management fundamentals, passenger information, integrated approach and their application in law enforcement was delivered by an expert of the Belgian Passenger Information Unit (PIU). The training aimed to reinforce the understanding of in-

telligence, risk management, risk mitigation and their relevance and role in the law enforcement. Through the lens of inter-agency action, the training focused on passenger information, the structure and the functioning of analysis processes aimed at identifying suspicious patterns from both known and unknown high-risk passengers. Based on the best practices of a European PIU, the participants also had the opportunity to understand the targeting rules, watchlists, data gathering challenges and the integrated ap-

proach to tackle criminal organizations and disrupt their networks. The training was conducted using the UNODC E-Learning platform with the course structured over 14 hours and four consecutive days. During the training, the participants were able to exchange views and experiences using multiple questions/answers sessions, instant polls and practical exercises. The training also included a final comprehension test, the completion of which generated a certificate of attendance/proficiency for the trainees.