



MEDIA OPERATIONS CENTRE (MOC)

Press and Media Service, NATO HQ BRUSSELS

T: +32-2-707-1007/1003

F: +32-2-707-1001

Email : mailbox.moc@hq.nato.int

FACT SHEET

NATO's SUPPORT TO COUNTER-NARCOTICS EFFORTS IN AFGHANISTAN June 2009

- Eliminating the illicit production of opium in Afghanistan is vital to the long-term security, development and effective governance of Afghanistan. Today, poppy cultivation continues to be a strategic threat in areas where there is a relative lack of strong governance. The narcotics trade funds and supports the insurgency, drains the legal economy and promotes widespread crime and corruption
- The Afghan Ministry of Interior, in coordination of the Afghan Ministry of Counter Narcotics, is leading the implementation of the Afghan Government's National Drug Control Strategy. NATO-ISAF, alongside the international community, is fully committed to supporting the Afghan government's counter-narcotics programme.
- NATO's main mission – helping the Afghan government extend its authority throughout the country, and setting the conditions for reconstruction and development – is key to the success of the overall counter-narcotics efforts.
- In October 2008, based on the request of the Afghan government, consistent with the appropriate UN Security Council Resolutions, and under the ISAF's existing operational plan, NATO Defence Ministers decided to allow ISAF to act in concert with Afghans against narcotics facilities and facilitators supporting the insurgency. Narcotics facilities/facilitators are defined as all facilities associated with narcotics industry and those individuals involved in the processing, storing and transporting of illegal narcotics or precursor chemicals that directly support the insurgency.
- Over the January-April 2009 period, ISAF conducted 37 counter-narcotics operations, which led to the seizure and destruction of more than 100 tons of poppy seeds, 40 tons of opium, 6 tons of morphine base and over 58 tons of opium precursor processing chemicals. As a result, USD 4.6 million (EUR 3.2 million) were denied to the insurgencies, thereby seriously damaging their and the narcotics networks' ability to operate.
- According to the latest UNODC survey (January 2009), there are now 18 opium-free provinces in Afghanistan¹, as opposed to 13 in 2007.

¹ Those 18 poppy-free provinces are: Balkh, Bamyan, Ghazni, Jawzjan, Khost, Kunduz, Logar, Nuristan, Paktika, Paktya, Panjshir, Parwan, Takhar, Wardak, Ghor, Nangarhar, Samangan, Sari Pul.