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IN THIS ISSUE

Word of Welcome
Page 1

Conference announcements
Page 2

Emerging Cocaine Routes
in the Balkans.
Page

Some UN statistics on
cocaine trafficking and
consumption.
Page 6

Expansion of the 'West-
Africa route' in Algeria .
Page 7

Books to review for *Global
Crime*
Page 8

Information on the ECPR
Pisa conference
Page 9

Cocaine trafficking in
Southern Italy- The
'Ndrangheta and the SCU
and the transnational
threat of cocaine traffick-
ing, supply and consump-
tion
Page 10

ECPR SGOC in Pisa:
overview of the program.
Page 12

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www.essex.ac.uk/ECPR

Theme: Examining Cocaine Trafficking in Europe

Word of Welcome

The May issue of the newsletter is finally ready and another challenging topic – which we hope you will find interesting - has been briefly discussed by several authors. As you are probably aware, the theme for this issue is *Examining Cocaine Trafficking in Europe*. According to the 2006 UN world drug report- which tries to provide a comprehensive picture of the world drug situation - 99% of the cocaine seized in Europe was destined directly from South America.

In addition to Colombia, Peru and Bolivia are frequently mentioned among European countries as source countries for cocaine found on their markets. European cocaine seizures amounted to close to 80 tons in 2004, the second highest ever reported and – according to Europol and UN- are likely to show a new all-time high for the year 2005 at around 100 metric tons in the European Union. Seen over period of time since 1994 the rate of cocaine confiscations in Europe has doubled. New technologies in airports and seaports and increasing security measure have boosted the chances of intercepting drugs. Regional and international cooperation of law enforcement and intelligence sharing has also produced some astonishing results. Spain, Belgium, The Netherlands, Portugal and Italy account for the largest percentage of these confiscations. However, at the same time the purity and price of cocaine in the European markets have not responded to the increasing seizures and - on the contrary- the cocaine abuse in Europe has even increased. However, on a global level, according to the UN report (2006), some encouraging trends were noted in relation to the coca/cocaine market. The area under coca cultivation remained stable and below levels recorded in 2000; the global production of cocaine stayed largely at the same level; seizures of cocaine rose to new highs; and global cocaine use declined slightly. At the beginning of this newsletter you can read more about the UN statistics from 2006 in relation to cocaine trafficking and consumption in Europe and beyond.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that international drug control is one of the oldest forms of multilateralism, although not as old as the use of psychoactive plants. It was at the beginning of the 20th century when a number of national drug problems turned into international ones. The International Opium Commission was convened in Shanghai, China, in 1909 and spawned the first instrument of international law to deal with psychoactive substances: the Hague Opium Convention of 1912. From these origins began a process that has evolved into the multilateral drug control system. According to the UN report, the scope of control over drugs has broadened and deepened over the years, from opium to cocaine to cannabis to psychotropic substances, and from the regulation of production and trade of medical drugs to the goal of international cooperation against the multi-faceted problems associated with illicit drugs.

In their article *New Cocaine routes in the Balkans*, Panos Kostakos and Jana Arsovska are arguing, that over the years, European law enforcement agencies have indeed become more efficient, as well as more familiar with the *modus operandi* and routes used by the cocaine traffickers. However, in the same manner, cocaine traffickers have also identified the *modus operandi* of the European customs by learning from passed experiences and can identify easier new ways to enter the drugs into the continent. Thus, networks that supply cocaine are using alternative and new trafficking routes –building on pre-existing criminal networks - in order to avoid attention by the police.

In his short contribution to this newsletter Ludo Block focuses on another of these new routes, that is an emerging route through Algeria. The relative stabilized situation in the country after a decade of political violence seems to result in growing opportunities for

organised crime in general and drugs trafficking in particular. It appears that the geographical proximity of West Africa, which in the past decade has developed to a transit hub for cocaine from the South Americas to Europe appears to play a role here as well.

Natasha Kingston then in her contribution analyses the involvement of the Italian mafie in cocaine trafficking. She shows that the 'Ndrangheta and the Sacra Corona Unita (SCU) have had a very important role in the cocaine trade in Italy and Europe as a whole. The 'Ndrangheta has not only a virtual monopoly on cocaine trafficking in Italy though also has a very sophisticated transnational network of contacts in this trade.

New approach on the blog

We also want to note that from May 2007 we are intending of setting up different research lines in the SGOC blog. The SGOC blog was set up in 2005 to complement the newsletter that appears only three times a year. As the newsletters focuses in-depth on one particular subject the blog is presently used to inform the members on more time critical matters – e.g. conference announcements, calls for papers. In addition, the blog carries entries on news and recent reports on organised crime.

With the aim to make the blog more interesting for the members an idea has emerged to create different 'research lines'. Each research line focuses on a specific topic in or connected to organised crime and will be maintained by one of the members that will act as coordinator of the line. He or she will post articles, links, commentary, original articles etc. on this specific topic in the blog. Members willing to maintain a research line will be authorised to make posts in the blog. Each research line could run for a limited time-period (six months to one year). In that time-period the member that maintains the particular line would contribute on that specific topic to the blog. After that time-period the research line is closed, possibly with an article in the newsletter, and a research line on a new topic is set up.

Two members have already agreed to start and maintain a research line, one on organised crime / terror connections, the second on political corruption. If you have any interest to join this research lines please contact the respective coordinators (Panos Kostakos p.kostakos@bath.ac.uk and Daniela Irrera danielairrera@yahoo.it)

Visit the blog at <http://sgoc.blogspot.com> to see for yourself how the research lines work. We would like to hear your feedback on this development. You can mail the editors if you have any ideas or comments or if you are interested in starting a specific research line.

The theme for the next issue of the newsletter is '**Representing a crisis: organised crime defying the State**'. This is a special issue of the newsletter aiming to give a good overview of the various OC related topics to be discussed in the Pisa conference in September. We kindly ask the chairs of the different panels in this conference as well as the presenters to send us short articles about their panels and/or presentations latest by 15 September.

Finally we wish to mention that the registration for the Pisa Conference is open. **We encourage you to register in a timely manner**, you can read more about the final program of the conference on page 12 and 13 in this issue of the newsletter.

We sincerely hope that you will enjoy this issue of the newsletter and we look forward seeing you in Pisa.

The editors,

Jana Arsovska & Ludo Block

Conference announcements

Third regional conference on combating organized crime

Date: 24 May 2007–25 May 2007

Location: Belgrade

Organized by: OSCE Mission to Serbia

Description: The theme of this conference is "Money laundering, asset seizure and asset forfeiture in relation to drug trafficking." The aim is to share lessons learned during the course of investigations and court proceedings with regard to implementation of the asset seizure law in drug-related cases.

More information at

http://194.8.63.155/serbia/item_6_24265.html

British Society of Criminology Conference 2007,

London, UK, 18-20 September 2007.

Hosted by the Mannheim Centre for Criminology, London School of Economics "Crime and Justice in an Age of Global Insecurity"

All the conference details, including how to submit abstracts, details of accommodation in Covent Garden and Trafalgar Square, and how to book, can be found on the conference website:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/bcc2007>. Inquiries can be made by email to:

criminology.conference.2007@lse.ac.uk

Fighting Crime in the Backyard: EU Internal Security Policies in the Balkans

Pre-conference Young Researchers Workshop
11 September 2007

Convenors: Cornelius Friesendorf and Ursula Schroeder

ECPR Standing Group on International Relations
"Making Sense of a Pluralist World: Sixth Pan-European Conference on International Relations"
University of Turin, Italy, 12-15 September 2007

Emerging Cocaine Routes in the Balkans¹

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It is increasingly becoming apparent that organised crime is not an alien invasion but a phenomenon that capitalises on existing social networks. The business of transnational organised crime relies heavily on the ever-expanding global trade and it builds on well-established criminal networks. Unlike most of the heroin trafficking that flows overland from East to West, cocaine trafficking faces additional geographical constraints. The major obstacles are the Oceans that separate the cocaine producer countries from European markets. Thus, cocaine has been often mixed with legitimate goods that are shipped to overcrowded European seaports and airports. Nevertheless, over the years, European law enforcement agencies have become more familiar with the routes traffickers use, as well as with their operational methods, and, in the same manner, cocaine traffickers – learning from past experiences – have also identified the operational methods of the European law enforcement. Thus, we derive to the probable scenario that networks that supply cocaine are inclined to be more flexible, and use alternative (and new) trafficking routes mainly in non red-flagged areas.

For example, in the 2005 meeting of Heads of National Law Enforcement Agency (HONLEA) it was noted that the Balkan region is becoming a transit point as new trafficking routes for cocaine are established. These alternative – less convenient – routes aim in overcoming the red-flagged trafficking routes and the stricter port control measures put in place particularly after 9/11. The trade liberalization in the Balkans, its proximity to Europe as well as the presence of pre-established transnational criminal networks in the region, offer a fertile ground for the expansion of cocaine trafficking. In this article we argue that a very recent cocaine seizure comes to support the assumption that new (or recently discovered) cocaine routes – build on pre-existing criminal networks – have been established in Europe.

Case in focus: Macedonian cocaine seizure

On 7 January 2007, the Macedonian police seized 483kg pure cocaine at the Macedonia-Kosovo border. The cocaine was brought from Venezuela to the port Bar in Montenegro. Police indicate that it was going to be transported to Greece by truck transiting via Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia. According to the police this is the biggest drug seizure ever done in Macedonia. The

worth of the cocaine is estimated to be between 46 and 92 million Euros, depending on the quality. If the cocaine is sold in the form it was confiscated (pure and in large quantities) the price will be around 46 million Euros; however, when sold in smaller quantities the cocaine is often mixed with other substances. According to experts, the retail price of the cocaine would have brought profits of approximately 92 million Euros.

When the Macedonian police intervened, the cocaine was hidden in cans filled with rubber tree paint with origin from Venezuela. The cocaine was professionally packed in plastic and metal covers and placed inside the cans partly filled with paint. It was traveling from Venezuela by ship and it reached the port of Montenegro in late December 2006. From the ship, the cans were placed in a truck driven by a Macedonian national. 'Macfood' is the name of the company that was importing the paint from Venezuela and the owner of this company is Stanislava Cocorovska-Poletan. Ministry's information states that this firm is the organiser of the cocaine shipment. Her firm traded in excisable goods and supplied duty-free shops with cigarettes and alcohol in the time of Slobodan Milosevic. The accused has a Macedonian citizenship, but has been living and working in Serbia for several years. She is known to the Macedonian public from 2000 when she publicly objected her involvement in trafficking of cigarettes and claimed that many Macedonian politicians and businessmen are closely connected to the family of Slobodan Milosevic, and are involved in his business with cigarettes and alcohol.

The lawyer of the accused explained that Cocorovska thought she is importing paint from a Greek citizen who lives in Venezuela. According to him, the cocaine is not the only product that can bring tenfold profit: the rubber tree paint is equally profitable. Cocorovska claimed that the paint can be bought in Venezuela for 80 Euros and sold in Europe for 800 Euros.

The destination of the cocaine was Greece, and according to unofficial sources, the Greek underground bosses paid an initial investment of 10 million Euros for the delivery of the cocaine to Greece. According to the police the money were most probably given by renowned international organised crime group composed of Swiss, Greeks and Germans who live in Greece. Moreover, the Ministry of Interior of Macedonia stated that the indicated export company from Venezuela was a nonexistent one, as well as the Greek company that was going to import the paint. The Macedonian police anticipate that part of the cocaine was to be distributed in Greece as a final destination and part was destined for the Western European market.

This cocaine trafficking case was closely followed by the DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency), the Greek secret service (EYP) and other law enforcement agencies. This is the first time were such a large quantity of cocaine was transported via this particular route into Greece.² The

¹ This article is based on a previous more substantial article published in *Jane's Intelligence Review*. Arsovska, J. & Kostakos, P. (2007) 'Cocaine traffickers turn to the Balkans – Changing routes', *Organised Crime, Jane's Intelligence Review*, Volume 19, Number 3, March 2007

² Despite the fact that the sized drug in recent years in Europe has doubled, the quantity of confiscated drugs in Macedonia

present seizure gives more weight to the already established pattern that has been noted by the UN, Interpol, Europol, and HONLEA that the Balkans are increasingly becoming gateway point in cocaine trafficking. Some cocaine seizures in the Balkans over the past years imply that the region is been used as a transit point to move cocaine to Greece and other EU countries for further distribution. Regarding the case, so far charges are pressed against the accused Stanislava Cocorovska and the driver Alija Azirovic, who claim they are innocent.

Pre-established criminal networks

One possible answer to the question why drugs were transported via this particular route links to politics, corruption and pre-existing smuggling channels for cigarettes and other goods that date back to the time of Slobodan Milosevic (1990s). If analysing rationally the case, the traffickers should have never selected such a high-risk complex route with many borders if they did not feel that they have the situation under control. Therefore, one assumption is that the traffickers have powerful political connections and tight links to custom officials all over the Balkan countries which made them confident regarding the safe transfer of cocaine. It is very possible that they have been using this route in the past, either for smaller shipments of cocaine or even more likely for contraband cigarettes and alcohol. Because of high level of corruption and porous borders it is no wonder that many shipments in this region go unnoticed. However, in order to clarify these assumptions it is important to briefly explain who Stanislava Cocorovska is and how her company 'Macfood' intended to transfer the cocaine from Montenegro to Greece.

One dazzling thing about Cocorovska is that she is married to Ranko Poletan, one of the commandants of the *Arkan's Tigers* and his bodyguard. Zeljko Raznatovic-Arkan was one of the most notorious mobsters and war criminal (paramilitary leader) associated with the Serbian state security services (SDB, Sluzba Drzavne Bezbednosti). During the time of Milosevic and Arkan, Cocorovska was known in Macedonia as one of the main suppliers of duty free shops with cigarettes and alcohol. She was also very closely connected to various political leaders in Macedonia. During the 1990's cigarette smuggling become one of the most profitable and widespread illegal activities in the Balkan region, simultaneously sustaining governments in the region as well as draining the newly formed states of their potential tax revenue. Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia and Macedonia, and Bosnia have been financing their activities with tobacco trade at the beginning of the wars in former

and Kosovo in the last five years still remains quite low. However, this does not necessarily mean that these data are reliable. In many Balkan countries (particularly former Yugoslavia), drug related cases are often left aside and are not investigated thoroughly. Besides the complicated nature of drug related criminal activities, the political involvement and the high levels of corruption might be another significant factor for the low numbers of seized drugs. The third possibility is that indeed the Balkan countries until very recently were not used by traffickers for certain types of drugs, such as, for example, cocaine because there were other more convenient routes.

Yugoslavia. Cigarettes first arrive into Montenegro either by planes from Rotterdam or by boat through the ports of Bar and Ulcinj. From Montenegro, they are either sent onto the markets of former Yugoslavia (Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Bosnia), where they are sold without excise tax and label, or transported with speedboats into Italy, and then back into Western Europe.

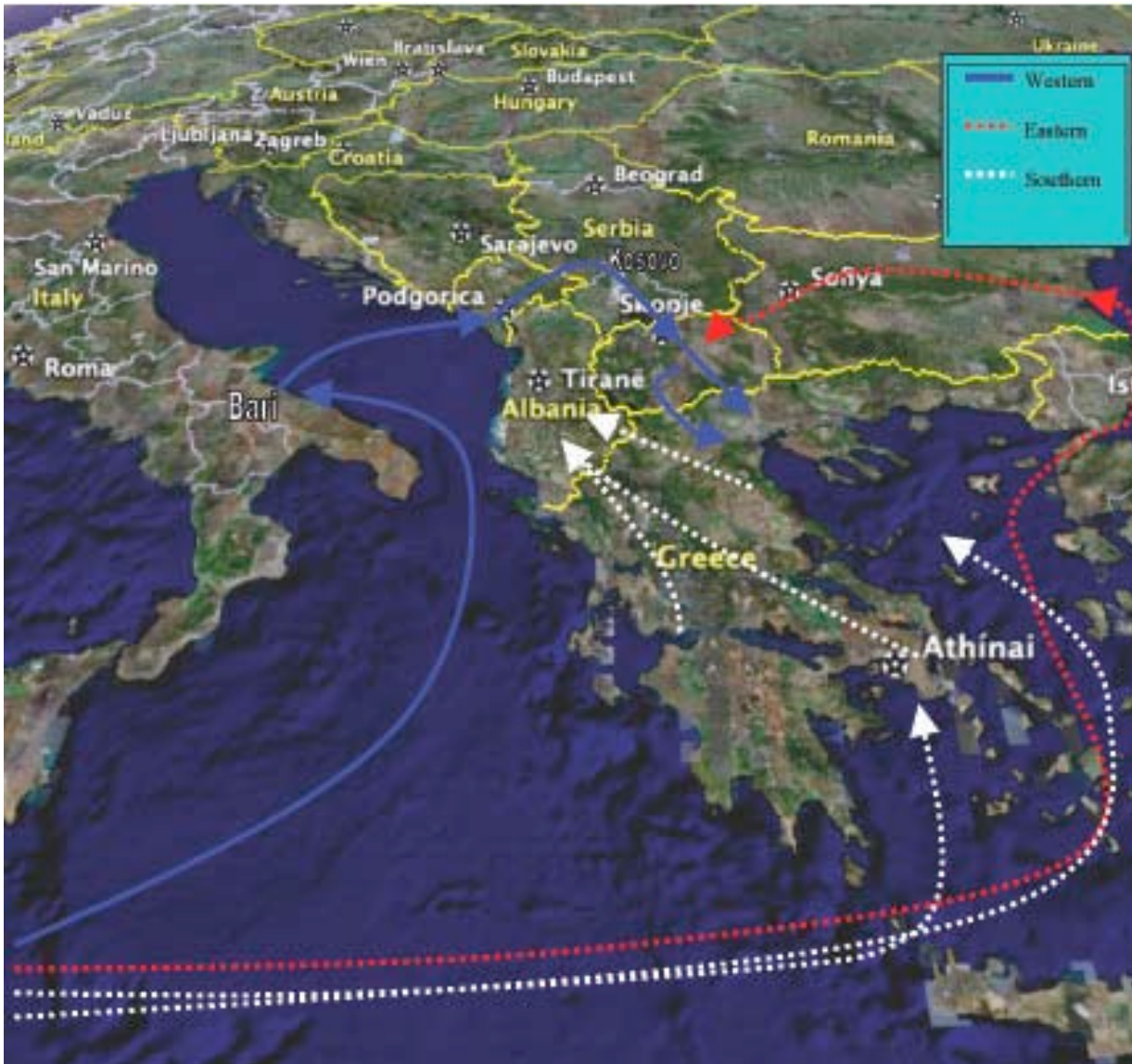
In general, cigarette smuggling prospered because of the existence of several borders in the region, which were deliberately kept porous for political reasons. After the fall of Milosevic's regime, the new Serbian authorities took numerous measures to cut the cigarette smuggling channels. However, although there was some success in reducing these activities, traffickers did not discontinue their illegal operations. Some who were well connected re-oriented their activities from cigarette to drug smuggling using some of the same smuggling channels.

The Greek connection

In the particular drug seizure described above, Greece was identified as an entry point; however, the overall composition of the criminal network remains unknown. Evidence that Greece has become a transit and entry point to the EU for cocaine trafficking starting to emerge in the early 1990s. Based on confiscation data the most visible route that has been used so far - as an entry point - is the **Southern Balkan Route**. In 1993 the Greek customs in the port of Piraeus confiscated 114 kilos of cocaine that was destined for Bulgaria. A year later police confiscated 100 kilos of cocaine that was destined for Albania. In another instance in the summer of 2000, the Greek customs seized 126 kilos of cocaine in the port of Piraeus that was planned to transit Albanian and had Kosovo as the final destination. In another case in 2000 the owner of a well known gym was arrested and accused for organizing the trafficking of 300 kilos of cocaine from Peru to Albania via Greece.

In 2001 the Greece police in cooperation with the DEA confiscated more than 200 kilos of cocaine that was stored in Greece in the area of *Prebeza* for future transportation to the West Europe. The existing route that relies heavily on cocaine entering from the Greek ports does no longer guarantees the safe transit of illegal cargos. New technologies and port control protocols - introduced to most European ports for monitoring possible terrorist related activities - have to a great extent deactivated the Southern route.

In 2005 the first case emerged suggesting that an **Easter Balkan route** has been used as an alternative entry point. In 2005 the Greek police dismantled a network that was importing cocaine from South America. The drugs first arrived to Bulgaria, and then, via Skopje, were smuggled to the North of Greece for further distribution in the EU.



The establishment of this cocaine route is linked with the growth of Bulgarian criminal networks that are becoming more connected to transnational criminal networks with interest in the cocaine market. However, the present case suggests that also a **Western Balkan route** has been established for trafficking of cocaine into the EU.³

This new development possibly occurred as a result of the anti-trafficking measures undertaken by European law enforcement officers and it shows the role of pre-existing networks that operate in the region. More specifically, Serbian and Greek smuggling networks have been using the same routes in the past for smuggling of cigarettes and oil during the Yugoslav crisis.

Greece and Serbia always have had strong historical, geopolitical, economic, religious and economic links. Building on these pre-existing social bonds, criminal networks over the past decades have engaged in long term partnerships especially in cigarette, oil and drug smuggling as well in other shadow activities. It has been reported that a number of organised crime groups with durable structures and links with Greek businesses as well as political elites during and after the Yugoslav crises developed strong ties with criminal elements that were known associates of Milosevic and Arkan.

³ There have been shipments of cocaine from Albania to Greece but according to the police this are usually small quantities mainly for local consumption; also there are large shipments of cocaine from Greece to Albania, yet in these cases Albania has been used only as a transit point. In general the map presented above shows only the relevant routes for cocaine trafficking in which Greece is either transit or entry point.

Some UN statistics on cocaine trafficking and consumption⁴

Global cultivation of coca remains stable in 2005

Preliminary figures suggest that the total area under coca cultivation remained stable in 2005. Thus the area under coca cultivation (159,600 hectares) was 28 per cent below the peak levels recorded in 2000 (221,300 hectares). Most coca continues to be cultivated in Colombia (54 per cent), followed by Peru (30 per cent) and Bolivia (16 per cent). After four consecutive years of decline, over which coca cultivation decreased in Colombia, the total area under coca cultivation in that country increased by 8 percent to 86,000 hectares. The increase came about despite sustained eradication efforts of the Government of Colombia.

Some coca is cultivated in national parks which causes environmental damage, primarily deforestation. Nonetheless, the area under coca cultivation in Colombia is still 47 per cent less than in 2000. Coca cultivation declined in Bolivia (-8 per cent) and in Peru (-4 per cent) in 2005. However, the areas under coca cultivation are 74 per cent higher in Bolivia and 11 per cent in Peru as compared to the levels in 2000.

Estimated production of cocaine stays largely at the same level

The potential production of cocaine reached 910 metric tons in 2005. Potential cocaine production in Peru amounted to 180 metric tons in 2005 and to 90 metric tons in Bolivia. The overall level of cocaine production remained essentially stable in 2005 and is practically unchanged from the levels of a decade ago.

Global cocaine seizures rose to another record high in 2004

There are two main trafficking routes for cocaine:

- from the Andean region, notably Colombia, to the United States (often via Mexico), and
- from the Andean region to Europe (via the Caribbean and, increasingly, via Africa).

Cocaine seizures increased to 588 metric tons in 2004, an 18 per cent increase and the highest figure ever recorded. This followed an increase in global cocaine seizures of 34 per cent in 2003.

The increase has been – to a large extent - the result of better cooperation among law enforcement services and improved sharing of intelligence information. Indications are that this trend continued in 2005 and will probably continue in 2006.

Colombia seizes the most cocaine

For the third year in a row, Colombia seized most cocaine in the world (almost 188 metric tons), 32 per cent of the world total and an increase of 29 per cent compared to 2003. The second largest seizures were reported from the United States (166 metric tons, 28 per cent of the world total). In Ecuador, there has been a 9-

fold increase in seizures (5 metric tons in 2004, 44 metric tons in 2005). European cocaine seizures were close to 80 metric tons in 2004 and about 100 metric tons in 2005. Over the 1994-2004 period they increased by, on average, 10 per cent per year. Spain remains Europe's main entry point for cocaine. Large increases in cocaine seizures have also been reported from Portugal which has become another major gateway for cocaine destined for European markets.

Portugal reported the third largest cocaine seizures among European countries in 2004, after Spain and the Netherlands. One of the main cocaine trafficking routes to Europe continues to go via the Caribbean region. The Netherlands Antilles are of special importance in this regard. The Dutch authorities made more than 40 per cent of their total seizures in the waters around the Netherlands Antilles in 2004. There are also important cocaine shipments to metropolitan France transiting the Caribbean region, including the French overseas departments in the Caribbean.

Cocaine seizures in West and Central Africa show six-fold increase

The rising importance of Africa, and notably of West Africa, as a transit point for cocaine shipments destined for European markets is becoming more evident. Seizures made in Africa increased more than three-fold in 2004 with seizures in West and Central Africa increasing more than six-fold. Most of this cocaine is destined for Spain and Portugal for onward shipment to other European countries. Largest seizures over the 2000-2004 period in Africa were made in Cape Verde, followed by South Africa, Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria.

Despite this increase, African seizures still account for less than 1 per cent of global cocaine seizures but there are indications that only a very small proportion of cocaine transiting the African continent is actually seized. If it is sustained, this shift in trafficking patterns is likely to have an impact on abuse in Africa.

Overall level of cocaine use declines slightly

Cocaine use is estimated to affect 13.4 million people or 0.3 percent of the population age 15-64. Drug use perception trends show - for the first time in years- a moderate decline in 2004. Most cocaine continues to be used in the Americas, particularly North America, which accounts, with 6.5 million users, for almost half the global cocaine market. In the United States, recently released prevalence studies for high school students showed that, for both cocaine and crack cocaine, annual prevalence declined in 2005. Cocaine prevalence rates are some 20 per cent lower than in 1998. Declines in student surveys have been also reported from Canada and in studies conducted in a number of South American countries.

The opposite trend is observed in Europe, where cocaine use is still rising. The 3.5 million cocaine users in Europe account for 26 per cent of global cocaine use. Almost 25 per cent of the world's cocaine users are in West and Central Europe. Cocaine use in West and Central Europe (1.1 per cent of the population age 15-

⁴ This information are taken from the executive summary of the UN World Drug Report 2006. Full UNODC report can be downloaded at http://www.unodc.org/unodc/world_drug_report.html

64) is still lower than in North America (2.3 per cent) but the trend in Europe is pointing upwards. Annual prevalence rates of more than 2 per cent have been reported from Spain and the United Kingdom. In Oceania, the level of cocaine use is 0.9 per cent of the population age 15-64 and was perceived as falling.

Expansion of the 'West-Africa route' through Algeria

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The past few years in Algeria have been characterised by rapprochement between the government and the Islamic militants on the one hand and opening up to Western trade and influence on the other. The national reconciliation plan that was implemented after a decade clashes between Islamic extremists and the government shows promising results including the recent return of the leader of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), Rabah Kebir, who urged rebels still fighting the state to disarm. The number of violent attacks is steadily decreasing; down from a peak of 2.864 in 1998 to less than two hundred a year at present. Despite the recent bombings it appears that in general the Islamic insurgency in Algeria has lost momentum.

However, while the security forces were fighting terrorism, organised crime has developed and drug trafficking has significantly increased. From the fragmented statistical data available an unremitting increase in crime all over the country in the past three years is visible with the largest cities like Algiers, Annaba and Constantine most affected. Most worrying, however, is the emergence of seizures of increasingly large quantities of cocaine (>1kg) in the past year. Although Algeria - located east of Morocco - is traditionally a cannabis transit-hub cocaine trafficking through the country has up to recently only been suspected though never sustained with evidence from seizures.

As regards the cannabis trafficking, some estimates put the figure of cannabis resin passing Algeria annually at 900 tons. Cannabis seizures have been up from 1.7 ton in 2001 to 7 tons in 2004 and 9.6 ton in 2005 according to data of the so-called EU North Africa Regional Dublin Group.⁵ The most relevant cannabis seizures - as the 1500 kilo seized on 6 November 2006 in Sidi Bel Abbès illustratively shows⁶ - take place in the West of the country, between the Moroccan-Algerian border and the Mediterranean seaport of Oran. The cannabis smuggling is largely in the hands of indigenous Algerian networks like the famous Oran cartel led by the recently convicted Algerian 'Pablo Escobar', Ahmed Zedjabil.⁷

⁵ See for example Regional Situation report on North Africa (Council of the European Union document reference 16732/06 CORDROGUE 113 15.12.06)

⁶ Saisie record de drogue à Sidi Bel Abbès, El Watan 07-11-06

⁷ Mystérieux silence autour du Pablo Escobar algérien, El Watan 5-10-06

Cocaine use in Africa showed an upward trend in 2004, partly reflecting the increased use of Africa as a transshipment location for trafficking of cocaine to Europe. Cocaine use in Asia is still very limited.

But the situation as regards cocaine trafficking is different. With one exception, cocaine seizures in the past decades have been limited to a few hundred grams indicating limited domestic use and certainly no transit role for Algeria as regards cocaine. However, between July and September 2006 a number of connected cocaine seizures totalling almost 8 kilo were made between Tébessa in the east and Annaba in the northeast at the Mediterranean coast. Intelligence shows a connection with seizures on the coast of Mauritania earlier in 2006, providing tangible evidence that Algeria has become part of the cocaine route from South America via West Africa to Europe.

Western Africa has over the past decade become a platform for the storage and redistribution of cocaine. The large seizures made in the region, such as the 14 ton of cocaine seized in the port of Lagos in June 2006, are indicative of the scale of the problem.⁸ Under-funded police, established criminal networks and widespread corruption make West Africa an attractive back door into Europe for international drug traffickers. Typically, cocaine shipments would leave Brazil and pass through Dakar before being changed to another boat, often in the former Portuguese colony of Cape Verde, with Europe as final destiny. Another route along which cocaine is trafficked from West Africa to Europe is by air as, for example, seizures in Ireland indicate.⁹

South American cartels have come to Dakar and as Senegal's police force has discovered structured networks emerged composed of Senegalese, Colombians and Europeans.¹⁰ Not surprisingly a number of EU law enforcement agencies combine their resources and are setting up a European Intelligence Platform in Dakar.¹¹

However, organised criminal networks seem to adapt quickly. Changing circumstances - *i.e.* the relative quietness on the insurgency front and opening up of Algeria to European influences - combined with the increased focus of law enforcement on the West African route appear to have prompted the organisers of cocaine trafficking to diversify and start using other tactics and routes. The porous borders in the south of Algeria and century

⁸ Regional report on Western Africa (Council of the European Union document reference 16344/06 CORDROGUE 112 12.12.06)

⁹ African drugs gangs recruit East Europeans, Irish Examiner, 9 August 2006.

¹⁰ 'Senegal Fights Colombian Cocaine Flooding West Africa'. Reuters, Sept. 22, 2005

¹¹ State of play of implementation by MS and EU bodies of EU priorities for the fight against organised crime based on the OCTA 2006 (Brussels, 13 November 2006).

old smuggling routes through the Sahara provide excellent opportunities.

A first indication of cocaine transit through Algeria surfaced in 2001 when a large hidden compartment in a cooling truck with traces of the substance was discovered. But never before such tangible evidence of actual cocaine trafficking through the country was encountered as the seizures last summer.

Some assume that established cannabis smuggling networks are also used for cocaine trafficking. However, the location of the recent seizures – east of the country and not west close to Morocco - indicates otherwise. Moreover, as the previous head of the Algerian *Office national contre la drogue et la toxicomanie* (national drug combating agency) last year stated, cocaine trafficking through Algeria is in the hands of well-organised sub-Saharan gangs.¹²

These gangs often use sub-Saharan illegal migrants on their way to Europe as drug couriers. For the young economical migrants taking a kilo of cocaine on their route is an easy way to finance their trip and simultaneously the organisers of the drug trafficking are ensured of couriers that are determined to reach their destination.

The developments described here are only illustrations based on limited secondary data sources. They nonetheless highlight ample opportunities for research into in adaptive organisation of drug traffickers and responsive strategies of law enforcement. When did cocaine traffickers consider Algeria to be secure enough to use it as trafficking route? How long did (or will) it take law enforcement to notice this new route and to adapt its response? Also the apparent convergence of organised illegal immigration and drug trafficking could provide an interesting research case into the convergence of different criminal activities.

Books to review

If you would like to review a book (from the list below or others) for the journal *Global Crime* please contact Felia Allum (email: allum@waitrose.com).

The European Fight against Terrorism and Drugs - Jorg Friedrichs July 2005

Organised crime and corruption in Georgia - L. I Shelley, E. R Scott and Karen Saunders, August 2006

Global Crime Today, The changing face of organised crime - ed M. Galeotti

Russian Criminal Tattoo Encyclopedia: V II. Danzig Baldaev et al. Jan 2006 FUEL Publishing

The Triads as Business - Chu Yiu Kong Feb 2006 Routledge Curzon

¹² Nos villes deviennent le paradis des narcotrafiquants, El Watan 5-10-06

Street Justice: Retaliation in the Criminal Underworld - Bruce Jacobs, Richard Wright 31 May 2006 Cambridge Studies in Criminology

Colored Amazons: Crime, Violence, and Black Women in the City of Brotherly Love 1880 - 1910 - Kali N Gross 15 August 2006 Duke Uni Press

Transnational Organized Crime in the West African Region United Nation Publications, April 2005

Crime, Punishment, and Policing in China - Borge Bakken March 28 2006 Rowman and Littlefield Publishers

Rotten States?: Corruption, Post-Communism and Neo-Liberalism - Leslie Holmes 15 July 2006 Duke Uni Press

Outsmarting the Terrorists (Global Crime and Justice) Ronald V. Clarke, Graeme R. Newman Praeger Security International General Interest-Cloth (September 30, 2006)

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Information on the ECPR conference in PISA

The ECPR SGOC is pleased to announce that it will be present in Pisa.

The ECPR Standing Group's section entitled 'Representing a crisis: organised crime defying the State' has been accepted for the ECPR's 4th General Conference which will take place in Pisa in September 6th-8th 2007.

Instead of the 10 panels it had hoped for, it will have 7 panels addressing and dealing with the latest research. This also means that the group can meet, talk and exchange information. Please see page 12 and 13 of this newsletter for detailed information on the very interesting program of the SGOC section in Pisa

For those of you giving papers or who wish to participate registration for the conference is now open. See: <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/generalconference/pisa/reginfo.aspx>

It is advisable for you to register BEFORE the 1st of JUNE 2007 as there is an increase of 50 euros after that date. If you do not belong to an ECPR institution please check the amount which you need to pay.

Accommodation will also be organised through the local Pisa organisers. For further information, look at the website: <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/generalconference/pisa/PisaAccommodation.htm> (detailed information will become available in May)

Cocaine trafficking in Southern Italy- The 'Ndrangheta and the SCU and the transnational threat of cocaine trafficking, supply and consumption

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From the Incas to modern day Columbia, Bolivia and Peru, the coca leaf has been chewed as a drug for many hundreds, and even thousands, of years. With the introduction of Vin Mariani, a wine containing both alcohol and cocaine, developed by an Italian chemist in the 19th century, the usage of the drug became widespread not just in Italy but across Europe. Coca Cola followed some decades later which famously contained cocaine in original recipes but which is clearly not present in the product we consume today. During the same period, cocaine was sold medicinally by chemists and the benefits of its use were praised. As the product was developed, isolating the drug itself from the leaf, its usage clearly changed and it became a widely used recreational drug and this is when problems began with side-effects and the idea of the 'crash', following the initial high, and the high levels of addiction were quickly realised and it was first made illegal during the First World War.

In 2004, according to the United Nations World Drug Report, 589 metric tonnes of cocaine were seized globally by law enforcement authorities. Colombia seized 188 tonnes, the United States 166 tonnes, Europe 79 tonnes, Peru 14 tonnes, Bolivia 9 tonnes, and the rest of the world 133 tonnes. The Italian Ministry of Health [Ministero della Salute] (2003) stated that it is estimated that habitual cocaine users have risen as high as 300,000 across Italy, above all in the central and northern parts of the country. Italy has the third highest rate of cocaine confiscated worldwide and levels of the drug seized went up by 20% in Lombardia and Lazio between 2004 and 2005 alone (Italian Institute of Social Medicine [Istituto Italiano di Medicina Sociale], 2007). The street price of cocaine in Italy is falling rapidly and whilst half a gram costs on average just €40, it has been found in Naples at as cheap as €12. Furthermore, between the years 1999-2002, the amount of people who turned to public services seeking assistance for cocaine addiction rose by 80% (Drug Addicts Services [Servizi per le Tossicodipendenze]) and so it is evident that cocaine is becoming a severe problem within Italian society.

The magnitude of the cocaine problem in Italy was illustrated recently in Italy by the discovery of cocaine levels in the Po Valley in 2005. Scientists testing the quality of river and sewage water found trace levels of cocaine three times the expected amount. The levels found in the water suggested that, as opposed to 15,000 suspected doses a day, in fact 40,000 doses are consumed daily (Mario Negro, Institute of Pharmacological Research, 2005 [Istituto di Ricerche Farmacologiche]). The previous rather staggering underestimation of cocaine usage in Italy is significant in that it may well have had an affect on the law enforcement response to an evidently very important and pressing problem in Italian society. Fur-

thermore, even if the evidence tells us that the biggest consumers of cocaine are in the centre and north, it is clear that when it comes to considering the sources and supply-routes of the drug, organised crime, predominantly in the south, comes in to play.

Whilst all of the Italian mafie have been involved in cocaine trafficking, the massive profits proving too much to resist, the 'Ndrangheta and the Sacra Corona Unita (SCU) have had a very important role in the cocaine trade in Italy and Europe as a whole. The SCU was founded by Pino Rogoli in Bari Prison in 1983 and quickly spread across the territory of Salento, reaching as far north as Taranto down to Brindisi and Lecce. It consists of about 50 clans with circa 2,000 members and its principal activities are smuggling cigarettes, drugs, arms, and people (FBI, 2007). Taking advantage of the global proximity to Eastern Europe from Puglia, the SCU made use of the influx of drugs and arms following the fall of the Berlin Wall in the post-communist bloc and the drug trafficking trade, and above all the strong link with Albanian organised crime syndicates, providing a lucrative and persistent flow of the drug in to Southern Italy.

According to the Italian State Police in 1994, 25 people in Salento were arrested for drug trafficking, including cocaine, and their capo, Fabio Franco, was apprehended in Brazil in 2003, leading to their eventual arrest. In October, 2006, 2 kilos and 300 grams of pure cocaine, with a market value of more than €500,000, were seized by the Leccese Carabinieri in the nearby countryside (Italian Journalistic Agency [Agenzia Giornalistica Italia], October, 2006). The drug was found near to where a famous fugitive had been found and arrested just a week earlier along with €100,000. Clearly cocaine means big business still today for the Sacra Corona Unita (SCU).

According to Cataldo Motta (Public Prosecutor for Lecce City, interviewed in 2006), the SCU have been proven to have interests and links not only locally but also internationally in terms of trafficking and importation routes of cocaine and heroin. Motta brings to the reader's attention the 12 arrests in 2000 following a long investigation carried out by the Leccese DDA of people of Italian, Columbian, Venezuelan and Albanian nationality linked to the confiscation of 12 tonnes of cocaine, thought to have arrived via Albania. Therefore, whilst the SCU has been noted for its relevance in cocaine supply and trafficking routes in both Europe, specifically the Balkans, and internationally, closer inspection has illustrated the importance of the 'Ndrangheta in cocaine trafficking and supply in Southern Italy as evidence shows that the SCU have never succeeded in forming the transnational links such as has been the case with the 'Ndrangheta but have rather depended on the existing links in Calabria in order to supply nationwide (Motta, 2006).

The 'Ndrangheta has the monopoly on cocaine trafficking in Italy and this has been the case for some time and the Calabrese clans have wide-reaching contacts, above all in Columbia and evidence shows the members of the 'Ndrangheta often act as the 'brokers' for the other organised crime groups across Italy (Italian Institute of Social Medicine [Istituto Italiano di Medicina Sociale], 2007).

Cocaine trafficking links have been discovered with the 'Ndrangheta in Spain, Holland, the USA, Canada, Columbia, Bolivia, and Brazil (Cesar Foundation [Fondazione Cesar], Dossier on the 'Ndrangheta in conjunction with UNIPOL, 2005).

Notoriously violent and unscrupulous, the 'Ndrangheta emerged in Calabria at the end of the 19th century and, ever since, organised crime and the problems associated with the phenomenon in the region have been rife. According to Eurispes, in 2004 the 'Ndrangheta earned €22 billion and had a yearly turnover of €36 billion, making it among the richest criminal organisations in Europe. Consisting of up to 160 'ndrine (cells) the FBI states that it has circa 6,000 members and the principal activities of the 'Ndrangheta are kidnapping and political corruption, but they have been known to also engage in drug trafficking, murder, bombings, counterfeiting, gambling, frauds, thefts, labour racketeering, loan-sharking, and alien smuggling (FBI, 2007). Nonetheless, even if official reports state these as the genuine numbers of 'Ndrangheta membership, according to local Nicola Gratteri, public prosecutor specialising in Calabrese organised crime, worldwide it numbers as many as 10,000 (The Guardian, 8th June, 2006). Gratteri states that approximately 80% of the cocaine which enters Europe is brought in by members of the 'Ndrangheta thanks to its links with Latin America and Gratteri argues that they 'represent the globalisation of Italian organised crime' (The Guardian, 8th June, 2006).

During the 1970's and 1980's the landscape of drug trafficking for the 'Ndrangheta was drastically altered, as stated by Gratteri, because the AIDS crisis had a widespread affect on the drugs trade as heroin was shunned and cocaine was favoured as AIDS related risks were avoided with cocaine consumption. The 'Ndrangheta initially bought their cocaine supplies in directly from Cosa Nostra, supplied by their own links with Columbian criminal organisations. However, as the 'Ndrangheta grew in strength and numbers, they started to make their own direct links with Latin American drug cartels, particularly in Columbia.

The sheer scale of the cocaine trade for the Calabrese mobsters illustrates the severity of the problem; in May, 2007, 250 kilos of cocaine were confiscated in Milan along with 20 arrests, including infamous 'Ndrangheta boss Salvatore Morabito and Milanese magistrates have recently estimated the growth in the narcotics activity of the clans, stating that they suspect that have an annual turnover of €40 billion, 3.5% of Italian GDP (The Times, 5th May, 2007). The 'Ndrangheta has been a long-time supplier of cocaine to northern Italy where this fashionable drug is consumed in substantial quantities as illustrated by the police investigation led by the force from Gioia Tauro, Calabrese port, which led to 17 arrests in Pavia, Torino, and Milano and the evidence which led to the discovery of links between the Pesce family and drug traffickers from Lombardy and Piemonte (La Repubblica, 2nd May 2007).

A further example of the problem is illustrated by the 250 kilos of cocaine were seized from a fruit and vegetable

market in Milan following a long-term police operation. Led by Laura Barbarini, the DDA worked in collaboration with Interpol on the investigation, finding 'Ndrangheta cosche in Milan and other parts of northern Italy and looking into links as far as Brazil, Argentina, Switzerland, Spain and Senegal leading to 20 arrests and mass seizures of cocaine. According to the investigation, the drug was produced in South America, transported to Senegal, moved from there to Lisbon and then on to Italy (Affari Italiani, 4th April, 2007).

In an article written for Espresso magazine on cocaine trafficking in Italy, Roberto Saviano states that there is nothing in the world which can compare with the speed of profit, the immediacy of distribution, continual supply, and scale of market growth, traversing barriers of class, generation and culture to that of cocaine (Espresso, 8th March 2007). Saviano argues that the cocaine business is the most profitable in Italy today and organised crime gangs make 60 times as much money as Fiat per year. Carabinieri investigations have shed light on to links between the Turkish mafia and Southern Italian cocaine brokers in return for arms (Espresso, 8th March 2007).

Investigating the murder of the vice president of the local council of Locri, Francesco Fortugno, a joint operation of the police and Carabinieri looking in to the 'Ndrangheta, and particularly the Crotona clan, uncovered a vast cocaine trafficking operation between Italian law enforcement agencies and as widespread as Spain, Holland, France, Belgium and Serbia and Montenegro and they discovered a vast flow of cocaine coming in from South America directly to Italy (The Repubblica, 21st October, 2005).

Interviewed for an pro-legalisation political association magazine (L'Associazione Politica Antiproibizionisti, May 2005), General Carlo Gualdi, director of the Central Anti-drug Services (La Direzione centrale dei servizi antidroga), states that the network of traffickers and producers is highly developed, the most organised being that of South America but links between the 'Ndrangheta and criminal groups in Nigeria, West Africa, and Spain must not be underestimated (L'Associazione Politica Antiproibizionisti, May 2005). Gualdi states that the route is simple; produced in South America, arrive in Europe via the large criminal organisations and are then sold, largely in Spain, Great Britain and Italy and communities in Albania, Morocco and Nigeria are also very important.

Data collated by Gualdi for the Central Anti-drug Services has demonstrated the level which the business of cocaine trafficking has reached as he predicts 800 tonnes of the drug would go in to circulation in 2005 and states that 3,572 kilos were seized in 2004 alone. In spite of these confiscations, Carabinieri Colonel Umberto Zuliani states that UN statistics tell us that in 2003 only 44% of cocaine produced was intercepted and the Columbian cartels don't stop there; they move on to new plantations in Ecuador and Venezuela where the controls are far lesser but what is required is more attention on the phenomenon and developing the politics and collaboration between the countries involved (Sulle piste della polvere,

F. Consentino, for the State Police (Polizia di stato), www.poliziamoderna.it, November 2005).

The evidence illustrates the vast flow of cocaine in to Europe, above all from South America but all across the globe. Trafficking and supply has reached levels never previously believed possible or credible but nonetheless this has been proven and now drastic action is required. How Italian and international law enforcement agencies choose to act, both individually and in unison, will be telling in the success of the fight against drug abuse and narcotics trafficking on a global scale but as it stands the phenomenon is, for now, continuing to grow.

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SGOC program in Pisa, Italy 6-8 September 2007: Representing a Crisis: Organised crime defying the State.

Organisers: F. Allum (Bath University, UK, email: allum@waitrose.com) and F Armao (Turin University, Italy, email: farmao@unito.it)

Provisional Programme: Please note that as yet we do not know the exact time nor days of the panels. When we have them we will let you know.

Panel one: The Measurement and Methodology involved in the Study of organised crime

Panel chair: Petrus Van Duyne (Tilburg University, Holland) and Klaus Van Lampe (Freie University, Germany).

- Organised Crime Threat Assessment behind the curtains: Europol and transparency (P. Van Duyne, Tilburg University, Holland)
- Measuring the unmeasurable: organised crime situation reports (K. Von Lampe, Freie University, Berlin, Germany)
- Methodological aspects of the Dutch National Threat Assessment 2006 (P. Klerks, Police Academy, Holland)

- The classics of organised crime (F. Varese, Oxford University).

Discussant: Henk Van de Bunt (Erasmus University, Rotterdam, Holland)

Panel 2: Bridging the gap between research and action. Panel chair: Monica Massari

- Professionisti dell'antimafia? Intellettuali, saperi accademici e culture mafiose/Professionals of the Antimafia: intellectuals, academic research and mafia culture (Alessandra Dino, Palermo University, Italy)
 - Quanto è utile la ricerca sociale sulle mafie? Mafia e antimafia tra saperi esperti, istituzioni, politica e società civile/How useful is research on the Mafia? Mafia and Antimafia between expert knowledge, institutions, politics and civil society (Rocco Sciarone, Turin University, Italy)
 - The role of information in the fight against organised crime: the case of Italy (Manuela Mareso, Narcomafie, Italy)
 - The OSCE and Organized Crime: The Challenges of Turning Consensus into Practice (Ian Mitchell, The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe)
 - Trafficking in minors and organized crime: paedophilia as a powerful business (Nicoletta Bressan, Meter Association, Italy)
- Discussant: Tonio Dall'Olio (LIBERA, Italy)

Panel 3: Real and Perceived Threats of organised crime. Chair panel: Sayaka Fukumi

- The Anti-Yakuza Law and the Activities of Yakuza (Sayaka Fukumi)
 - The European Union and Organized Crime: threat understanding and the making of a security policy (Helena Carraccio, European University, Florence, Italy)
 - From the Mafia to Street Gangs: Shifting Perceptions of Organized Crime in the United States (Joseph Wheatley, US Justice Department, US)
 - Political behaviour of contemporary criminal organizations (Marco Giaconi, International Security Research and Intelligence Agency)
 - Out of Africa: The human trade between Libya and Lampedusa (Salvatore Colucecello and Simon Massey, Coventry University, UK)
- Discussant: Panos Kostakos (Bath University, UK).

Panel 4: Organised Crime in a global context

Panel chair: Daniela Irrera (Messina University, Italy)

- The coming of age of the Sacra Corona Unita (Natasha Kingston, Bath University, UK)
 - Co-operation and Conflict: Balkan Organised Crime Groups in Greece (Sappho Zenakis, Hellenic Foundation for Foreign and European Policy)
 - The Mafia and the Prism: Some hypothesis about the different aspects of the Mafia's strategies (Giap Parini, Calabria University, Italy)
 - The relationship between organised crime and human trafficking in Ireland (Louise Deegan, Exeter University)
- Discussant: Francesca Longo (Catania University, Italy)

Panel 5: Organised Crime in the Balkans

Chair panel: Jana Arsovska, Leuven University, Belgium)

- The role of moral values, behavioural constraints and social environment in the development of Albanian organised crime (Jana Arsovska, Leuven University, Belgium)
- The rise and fall of a private protection organisation (Marina Tzvetkova, Oxford University, UK)
- The links between transnational organised crime and terrorism in the Western Balkans (Panos Kostakos, Bath University, UK)

- Organized crime in the Western Balkans (Vera Stojarova, Masaryk University, Czech Republic)

- EU Approach to crack down on drug trafficking: The case of the Balkans (Giuseppe Lucchese, Messina University, Italy)

Discussant: Henk Van de Bunt (Erasmus University, Rotterdam)

Panel 6: Prevention of Organised Crime and Corruption: International Efforts in post-Communist Countries

Panel Chairs: *Diana Schmidt* (Research Centre for East European Studies, Bremen, Germany) and Holger Moroff Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Germany)

- The Future of Anti-Corruption Measures in Central and Eastern Europe (Michale Bryane, Oxford University)
- Anti-corruption policies in Georgia: From rhetoric to practice (Lili Di Puppò, Europa Universitat Viadrina, Frankfurt Oder, Germany)

- The Illegal Movement of People into the EU and the Official Understanding of Organised Crime (John Spencer, Manchester University, UK)

- Of Cops and Robbers: The EU's Approach towards Organised Crime in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Loughborough University, UK)

- EU Conditionality and the Politics of Anticorruption in Bulgaria and Romania (Kalin Ivanov, University of Oxford, UK)

Discussant: Steven Sampson (Lund University, Sweden)

Panel 7: Fighting organised crime and terrorism

Panel chair: Bill Tupman (Exeter University)

- Market or security forces? Causal factors in terrorist and organised crime group structure (Bill Tupman, Exeter University, UK)

- Anticipating Radicalisation (James Gale, Exeter University, UK)

- Combating al-Qaida Influence in UK Muslim Communities: Importing Organised Crime Strategies (Robert Lambert, Exeter University)

- Regional Training to Combat Transnational Organized Crime (Ivan Safyan Abrams, American Bar Association/Central European and Eurasian Law/ ABA/CEELI)

- Security as an evolving concept to face emerging threats in terrorism (Marco Lombardi, Catholic University Milan, Italy)

Discussant: John McFarlane (University of New South Wales, Canberra, Australia)

CONTRIBUTIONS

For the newsletter we are looking for:

- Book reviews of approximately 500-900 words, original books in language of your choice but reviews should be written in English. Indicate the language of the book.
- Conference reports of about 1000 words in English. Share your experience at conferences with those who are unable to attend them;
- Information on Calls for Papers, coming conferences and any other interesting material for our readers.

For the newsletter we are looking for short original articles (1000-2000 words) on the themes of the newsletters. You are also invited to propose a theme. **The September issue will be dedicated to proceedings of the Pisa conference. The deadline for that issue is 15 September 2007.**

Please send your (ideas for) contributions to: oceditor@lycos.co.uk

Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information contained in this newsletter, neither the Editors nor the ECPR can accept responsibility for any errors.