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INTERPOL'S EXPERIENCE IN COMBATING DRUG-RELATED CRIME

According to statistics, before the full-scale invasion, in 2022 there were 20,140 cases of criminal offenses related to the circulation of narcotic drugs in Ukraine without the purpose of sale, 10,162 with the purpose of sale, 1,716 cases of poppy and hemp cultivation, and 115 cases of smuggling. Interpol as International Criminal Police Organization that fights all types of crime has to counteract such crimes,

and also Ukraine as a member country of Interpol. So, I want to talk about INTERPOL's experience specifically in drugs fight because, at present, combating these criminal offenses is a very pressing issue, and INTERPOL has extensive experience in investigating and stopping them.

INTERPOL notes that Criminal networks traffic a range of drugs including cannabis, cocaine, heroin and synthetics such as methamphetamine and fentanyl. As international borders become increasingly porous, global abuse and accessibility to drugs have become increasingly widespread. This international trade involves growers, producers, transporters, suppliers and dealers. It affects all of our member countries, undermining political and economic stability, ruining the lives of individuals and damaging communities. The end-users and addicts are often the victims of a powerful and manipulative business. Drug trafficking is often associated with other forms of crime, such as money laundering or corruption. Meanwhile, trafficking routes are used by criminal networks to transport other illicit products including firearms, uncut diamonds and live pangolins creating a convergence of crime.

As criminals devise ever-more creative ways of disguising illegal drugs for transport, law enforcement officials face challenges in detecting such concealed substances. In addition, new synthetic drugs are produced on a regular basis, so police need to be aware of new trends and products on the illicit market. Since the types of drugs trafficked and the routes used are constantly evolving, it is essential that countries work together in a united and coordinated way. At INTERPOL, we offer a range of services including training and operational support to help law enforcement agencies around the world increase their capacity to detect and investigate drug trafficking.

Last successful operation was on 21 October 2025, when the Kenyan Navy intercepted a dhow around 340 nautical miles east off the coast of Mombasa. The operation came after intelligence was shared between the Regional Narcotics Interagency Fusion Cell (RNIFC) in Bahrain, and the Regional Coordination Operations Centre (RCOC) in Seychelles. Three days later, the vessel was brought to Mombasa, where a multi-agency coordination centre was established under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commander of the Kenyan Navy. In its advisory and mentoring capacity, INTERPOL played a central role in

overseeing search operations and ensuring rigorous crime scene management to support future judicial proceedings. INTERPOL also coordinated operational support from the U.S. Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS), which deployed two officials to help with search operations and communication with crew members. In total, authorities uncovered 769 packets of a crystal substance weighing 1,024 kg. Forensic analysis by the Government Chemist confirmed the substance to be methamphetamine with a purity level of 98%. Experts in Kenya estimate the seizure to be worth more than KES 8 billion (USD 63 million). Six crew members were arrested and are facing drug trafficking charges. Investigations are ongoing under Kenya's Anti-Narcotics Unit. This operation highlights the importance of international cooperation and information sharing in addressing maritime drug trafficking and strengthening regional security across the Indian Ocean. In my opinion, this operation shows how experienced Interpol officers are and how important it is to cooperate with this organization and learn from their experience.

Other well-known operations are following: 1) Operation LIONFISH-HURRICANE (April–May) highlighted the evolving cocaine trafficking routes from South America to Europe via West Africa, leading to seizures valued at USD 1.6 billion. Authorities confiscated 56 tonnes of cocaine and over 500 tonnes of precursor chemicals, with more than 200 offenders arrested across 31 countries. Intelligence gathered further exposed the extent of poly-criminality, enabling the seizure of weapons, explosives, vehicles, and properties linked to organized crime networks. 2) Tri-Border Operation (December - Pre-Operational Phase): INTERPOL initiated the strategic planning for an operation targeting organized crime and poly-crime activities across the borders of Turkey, Bulgaria, and Greece. Intelligence and analytical officers were deployed to the tri-border region to prepare for a 2025 operation aimed at dismantling criminal networks, seizing illicit drugs, gathering intelligence, and strengthening border security in this high-risk region. 3) Project POSEIDON: Throughout 2024, INTERPOL provided intelligence and analytical support to Project POSEIDON, a joint initiative with EUROPOL analyzing the SkyECC dataset on organized crime activity in Africa. INTERPOL identified key intelligence matches related to a 750kg cocaine shipment from South America to Benin, facilitating a case

coordination meeting between the two countries to advance multijurisdictional investigations and joint operational action plans.

Successful operation of the National Police of Ukraine was on 13.05.2025. In a large-scale operation covering 15 regions of Ukraine, police successfully uncovered an organized group involved in the production and supply of psychotropic substances, including alpha-PVP, amphetamine, and mephedrone. The operation took place in the morning simultaneously in Kyiv and in regions such as Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Zhytomyr, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Odesa, Lviv, Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, Volyn, Mykolaiv, Ternopil, and Khmelnytskyi. According to the National Police of Ukraine, the suspects created an extensive network of drug laboratories and warehouses where they manufactured, packaged, and stored illegal substances. Their facilities were capable of producing over 700 kg of drugs per month, which were supplied to consumers from various regions of the country. It is estimated that the market value of the drugs on the black market exceeds 300 million hryvnias. "Seventeen drug laboratories and 15 warehouses with psychotropic substances have been eliminated. Seized were 118 kg of mephedrone, 160 liters of reaction mixtures equivalent to 80 kg of mephedrone, 156 kg of alpha-PVP, over 30 kg of amphetamine, as well as 12 tons of precursors," the police stated. As we can see, the employees of the National Police of Ukraine are also successfully working to stop this type of crime, conducting large-scale operations. Ukraine can carry out operations together with Interpol forces in order to further develop in this area and improve the skills for investigating these crimes.

In conclusion, I want to say that studying the experience of such a global multinational organization as INTERPOL is very important because highlighting the expertise of specialists from different parts of the world can positively contribute to increasing the detection of crimes in the field of drug trafficking in our country. Currently, during the full-scale invasion, most law enforcement officers focus more on war crimes, and as a result, drug criminals try to expand their illegal business and circumvent outdated methods of preventing drug-related crimes. However, the National Police of Ukraine does not stand still and continues working to improve the situation in the country.

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U.S. POLICE EFFORTS IN COMBATING CRIME: STRATEGIES, CHALLENGES, AND OUTCOMES

The fight against crime remains a cornerstone of public safety, with police forces worldwide employing a variety of strategies to prevent, detect, and respond to criminal activities. In recent years, particularly leading into 2025, law enforcement agencies have adapted to evolving threats such as cybercrime, organized violence, transnational drug trafficking, and persistent community distrust following high-profile incidents of the early 2020s. We will try to examine the methods used by police to combat crime, the challenges they face, key statistics, measurable outcomes, and promising future approaches.