



Tajikistan - United Nations Update

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Successes in combating illegal drugs trafficking through Tajikistan:

A United Nations report in 2003 noted increased opium production in bordering Afghan districts. Drugs that are intended for Western markets often pass through Tajikistan, posing a constant challenge to development. The United Nations works closely with the National Drugs Control Agency, who — together with the Border Group of the Federal Border Service of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Tajikistan and other state institutions — claimed a 42% increase in drug seizures last year over 2002. More than nine tons of drugs were intercepted and destroyed, of which nearly two thirds was heroin.



300kg of heroin being destroyed on the border with Afghanistan

Tajik GDP growth reached 10.2% in 2003: The IMF report that, encouragingly, much of last year's growth came from outside the traditional areas of aluminium and cotton production. Final current account deficit figures are likely to be better than expected due to increased remittances from labour migrants. Concerns are still being raised at the slow pace of structural reform and high inflation.

Major government reshuffle: Over 30 senior Tajik government officials were removed or transferred in the biggest high-level shake-up for many years. Of particular note were the: Deputy Prime Minister for social affairs, Head of the Presidential Aid Coordination Unit, Director of the Presidential Drug Control Agency, State Advisor on Social Development and Public Relations and numerous District Heads in the North and South of the country.



Flooding in Rudaki District, April 2003

One of the most natural disaster prone countries in the world, Tajikistan saw over 9,000 homes damaged or destroyed in 2003: Government statistics show more than 120 incidents of flooding, avalanches and mud / land slides over the course of the last year. 14 small to mid-scale earthquakes were also registered. 93% of the Tajik territory is mountainous, making communication and access an ongoing problem. The United Nations and its partners are working with the Ministry of Emergency Situations to strengthen national preparedness, response, and mitigation efforts through capacity building, community mobilisation and information exchange.