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Immediate Release

Closing Ceremony for EU Action against Drugs and Organised Crime (EU-ACT) Project

Dar es Salaam, Friday, 24 September 2021

The closing ceremony of the European Union funded EU Action Against Drugs and Organised Crime (EU-ACT) Project is being held today at the Residence of the Ambassador of the European Union. This project was conceived in response to the growing problems of drug trafficking and abuse globally and has been implemented in Tanzania from 2017 until September 2021. The implementing partners on the EU side have been the Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP), the Italian Carabinieri, the UK National Crime Agency and the Spanish Ministry of Interior.

As the EU-ACT Project comes to an end in Tanzania, it has achieved remarkable milestones in collaboration with local authorities and key stakeholders in the country. The Project supported Tanzanian Authorities, such as the Drug Control and Enforcement Agency (DCEA) and the Public Prosecutor Service in drafting the country's first National Drug Policy. It also helped in preparing a Standard Operative Procedures Handbook, which contains useful guidelines for Tanzanian law enforcement officers dealing with drug related crime. In total, the Project's collaboration with Tanzanian partners has benefited more than 500 staff working in drug control and enforcement.

Additionally, EU-ACT helped to develop standardised procedures for the treatment of drugs users. It also organised several workshops on developing an asset orientated approach through financial investigations related to organised crime drug trafficking. Last but not least, the project has supported various Tanzanian stakeholders to attend international conferences and workshops relating to the reduction of drug supply, drug demand and drug harm.

Speaking at the closing ceremony Acting Commissioner for Operations Lt. Col. Fredrick Milanzi from the Drug Control and Enforcement Agency said, *"The investment of criminal proceeds and trade in illicit commodities is interlinked with tax avoidance and money laundering that strengthens criminal enterprises run by or associated with organised crime groups. In Tanzania, EU-ACT in co-operation with the DCEA and other bodies has successfully trained key staff to combat crime in this domain by focusing on parallel financial investigations and the seizure of criminal assets. In conjunction with other international partners, EU-ACT has also helped the DCEA to develop the capability to interdict drug traffickers at sea, leading to seizures of over 1 metric ton of drugs"*.

About EU–ACT

The project had a total budget of EUR 12 million. EU-ACT aimed at building capacities to increase regional and trans-regional law enforcement cooperation and coordination in the fight against organized crime and trafficking activities along the heroin route, as well as supporting the development of drugs policy and drug demand reduction activities.

Transnational organised crime is a multi-faceted phenomenon and manifests itself in different activities including drug trafficking, trafficking in human beings, in firearms and money laundering. Over the years, serious and organised crime has evolved in a dynamic and ever evolving phenomenon. Although it is difficult to measure the exact size of illicit markets, evidence drawn from law enforcement activity across the world suggests they are very large in both scale and impact. Serious and organised crime has a significant impact on the growth of the legal economy and society as a whole. The investment of criminal proceeds and trade in illicit commodities is interlinked with tax avoidance and money laundering that strengthens criminal enterprises run by or associated with Organised Crime Groups (OCGs).

Trafficking in drugs is one of the major sources of revenue of organised crime. The threats posed by drug trafficking for the regions involved, including source, transit and destination countries are multiple. The impact on the economic and social development from drug abuse and the linked money laundering is estimated to be more than double to the corresponding criminal proceedings. Analyses show that the market for illicit drugs remains the most dynamic among the criminal markets with the highest number of OCGs involved; this has led to the increased co-operation but also competition between these groups across national, linguistic and ethnic divisions which make the phenomenon more complex to understand and even more difficult to address effectively.

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