

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3119/06

by Antonis Samaras (PPE-DE) and Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Afghanistan and drugs

According to the latest data contained in the 2006 annual report on drugs produced by the UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), the situation regarding the production and trafficking of drugs by Afghanistan continues to be extremely disturbing and devastating. Approximately 90% of the heroin consumed in the EU comes from that country, which also accounts for 87% of the world's production of opium with a total value of 2.7 billion dollars. Despite the declarations and efforts made by the international community and the EU to stamp out the phenomenon (development aid, humanitarian aid, crop substitutes), total production of opium fell by only 2% in 2005, demonstrating the ineffectiveness of the policies pursued. According to the UNODC's initial estimates, crops of Indian cannabis will remain at the same levels or will even exceed last year's levels throughout the country with the exception of three provinces. Moreover, 72% of the opium produced in Afghanistan is converted into heroin which kills thousands of people every day.

In the light of these statistics, what in the Commission's view are the reasons for these disheartening results of the efforts made to encourage the abandonment of growing and producing drugs in Afghanistan? What initiatives will the Commission take, particularly in the context of Action 35 of the EU's Action Plan on Drugs (2005-2008), which provides for aid to Afghanistan and its neighbours to combat the phenomenon? Has the Commission evaluated Community funding and initiatives to date for the 28 projects concerning Afghanistan, totalling 210 million euro? Finally, how does it intend to cooperate more effectively with the international community to tackle this tragic situation?