



Kyrgyzstan's experiences in counteracting illegal drug trade, in drug prevention and in therapy for drug addicts in the penitentiary system

Doświadczenia Kirgistanu w przeciwdziałaniu handlu narkotykami, w zapobieganiu narkomanii i terapii dla narkomanów w systemie penitencjarnym.

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Abstract: This report has been compiled and published as an activity of the TREAT Component within CADAP. The specific objective of TREAT is to promote and support the introduction of modern drug addiction treatment methods within the public health system and the prison system in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The TREAT Component is implemented by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Addiction Research, University of Hamburg, Germany (ZIS).

Keywords: the penal colony • postsoviet penitentiary system • prevention of addiction in the penal colonies • the therapeutic community in the penal colony • an informal organisation of penal colony • organised crime in the penal colonies • the management of penal colonies • penal colonies reform • illegal drug trafficking in the penal colonies • counteracting illegal drug trade in penal colonies

Streszczenie: Raport ten został opracowany i opublikowany jako działania komponentu TREAT w ramach CADAP. Szczególnym celem TREAT jest promowanie i wspieranie wprowadzania nowoczesnych metod leczenia narkomanii w ramach publicznego systemu ochrony zdrowia i systemu penitencjarnego w Kazachstanie, Kirgistanie, Tadżykistanie, Turkmenistanie i Uzbekistanie. Komponent TREAT jest realizowany przez Centrum Badań Interdyscyplinarnych Uzależnień Uniwersytetu w Hamburgu, Niemcy (ZIS).



Słowa kluczowe: kolonia karna • posowieckie kolonie karne • profilaktyka uzależnień w koloniach karnych • społeczność terapeutyczna w kolonii karnej • nieformalna organizacja kolonii karnych • przestępczość zorganizowana w koloniach karnych • zarządzanie instytucjami korekcyjnymi • reformowanie kolonii karnych • nielegalny handel narkotykami • zwalczanie nielegalnego handlu narkotykami

The „Clean Zone” project¹

I. Organizational and social pre-conditions of illegal drug trade in penal colonies, determining the method of counteracting, treatment and control of drug abuse.

Under CADAP (Central Asia Drug Action Programme), an original and unique system of actions leading to the reduction of drug consumption in prison camps, has been developed and implemented, such system being given the working name – the “Clean Zone”.² The project of preventing drug addiction in prisons, which is presented in this article, has been developed based on the diagnosis of the crisis that took place in the entire post-Soviet prison system, and, in particular, on the analysis of the situation in which the

prisons of Kyrgyzstan have found themselves after the country regained independence in 1991.³

The worsening situation in Kyrgyzstan's prison system by the end of 90's and at the beginning of the 21st century resulted, first of all, from the social and economic changes that had been started even before the Soviet Union collapsed and Kyrgyzstan gained independence.

The model of execution of the penalty of imprisonment, as adopted in the USSR, assumed that a prisoner had to earn his living, and, as a consequence, that the whole penitentiary system had to maintain itself on its own. Therefore, work should be provided to prisoners. For this reason, penal colonies were set up near big and small state-run economic projects and production enterprises, or such enterprises were built within the confines of the penal colonies.⁴ Thanks to the earnings generated by the enterprises, the entire penitentiary system could be maintained. Moreover, it was expected that the

¹ The project presented here has been developed for many years. It dates back to the period of my work in 1999 – 2002 for the Open Society Justice Initiative as an expert on the prison systems in the countries of the former USSR. First elements of that programme were prepared at that time for the Ministry of Justice and the penal system, which was administered by the General Directorate for the Execution of Punishment (Glavnoye Upravlenie Ispolnieniya Nakazaniy - GUIN), in Kyrgyzstan. Full crystallization, institutionalization and implementation of the program took place only after 2003, during my work under the CADAP EU program (initially implemented by UNDP and, then, by an EU membership consortium consisting of GIZ (Germany), ResAd (Czech Republic), KBNP (Poland) and ZIS (Germany), at its successive stages. In presenting the project I have used the observations made and the knowledge gained during my numerous contacts with prison employees and from collected press and documentary material in the years 1999 – 2012 in Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

² In this book, the term „Clean Zone” will be used in two meanings. In the first meaning – “Clean Zone” is understood as a system of actions leading to drug reduction in prison camps, in the second meaning – „Clean Zone” is used as a working name for the Rehabilitation and Social Adaptation Centre in which prisoners were placed, on a voluntary basis, having undergone the initial treatment under the „Atlantis” program in one of the Rehabilitation Centers set up at the prison camps.

³ It must be expressly underlined that the presented situation in Kyrgyzstan's prisons concerns the period when the program for counteracting drug addiction in prison camps just started to be created as a response to the situation occurred, i.e. by the end of the 90's and at the beginning of the new century. My diagnosis of the condition of Kyrgyzstan's prison system as well as my recommendations and program concepts were addressed, at that time, to the Vice Minister of Justice in charge of the penal system, gen. T. Aytbayev, and to his successor at this position, gen. S. Zubov.

⁴ A huge economic complex was established and penal colonies (forced labor camps) were set up in the areas where there was a demand for labor for the purposes of national economy. Labor camps were organized around gold-bearing fields, coal mines, nickel mines, areas of construction of roads and railroads, channels, water-power stations, ordnance factories, chemical factories, plants producing sub-units and semi-products for other factories, metallurgical plants, power stations, airport and residential development sites, textile plants, peat mines, lumbering areas, canned fish production plants, animal breeding areas, cf. Labor Camps. Encyclopedic Guidebook. Collective work: Nikita Ochotin, Arsenij Roginskij, Siergiej Filippow. The “Memorial” Association, State Archives of the Russian Federation, 2002.



penitentiary industrial complex would be profitable and bring gains for the State. Production is profitable there, above all, where labor is cheap. It is because, generally, the costs of labor account for most of production costs. So, when creating new economic ventures, the State preferred those undertakings based on the use of cheap labor, such as, for instance, prison labor.

The repressive character of the penal colonies was intended to force prisoners to obey discipline and work hard, while keeping the costs of their maintenance low, contributing in this way to a higher efficiency of the enterprises. Therefore, the principal task of the prison system so designed was to organize production, ensure its uninterrupted continuity and achieve highest possible economic results. Only such a system was believed to be truly educational and socially useful. As a guarantee that the objectives of the prison system would be pursued, the prison systems were to be placed in the structure of the Ministry of the Interior.⁵

As a result of *perestroika*⁶, the implementation of the free-market economy concept and the companies' orientation to economic performance, the industrial model of penal colonies was found to be economically inefficient and loss-making, and it collapsed eventually. The State budget and the budgets of the particular republics were not prepared for the loss of

income from prison's production as a result of which the whole system of penal colonies fell into poverty.

In the Soviet times, there were twelve factories in Kyrgyzstan's colonies. GUIN (Glavnoye Upravlenie Ispelnieniya Nakazani) - the General Directorate for the Execution of Punishment was the fourth shareholder in the budget of the USSR Kyrgyz Republic. The prisons were financed with income generated from production, and the prisoners were paid for their work. A sudden collapse of the economic system of maintaining the colonies caused that, at the beginning, the budget was not prepared for the taking over of the task of financing of the prison system. In 2005 the budget could afford to cover 26% of the demand reported by the prison system, of which 25.5% of funds were designated for prisoners' food. In 2002 the daily cost of meals per prisoner was 6 to 7 soms (approx. US\$ 0.10). Those expenses were raised to 23-26 soms (US\$ 0.56-0.67) in 2006.

Of the total demand, the budget designated only 4% of funds for prisoners' clothes, 3.3% for equipment of the colonies' facilities, 2% for improving the state of safety in the colonies, 6% for necessary repairs and overhauls, 39% for payment for electricity consumption⁷.

Given so small a budget, insufficient to satisfy basic needs, the prison system ran into debt. The repayment of the debts and accrued interest reduced even more the means obtained from the budget. The foundations, non-governmental organizations that wanted to aid the prison system had problems with lawful transfer of funds for particular programs, because the money paid by them into the account of the prison system would be taken off to repay the debts.

Sometimes there was insufficient money to pay the officers - they were paid irregularly. Salaries in prisons are very low. A common supervisor who works within the 'zone', who maintains order, earns about US\$ 70 a month, an officer managing a group of pris-

⁵As a result of taking a decision to use forced labor for the purpose of accelerating industrialization, in 1929 the authorities of the USSR moved the forced labor camps and prisons from the governance of the judiciary to NKWD, a policing authority, and then, in 1946, after the division of NKWD into the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of State Safety, to the Ministry of the Interior. The Ministry of the Interior became one of the major economic ministries in the USSR.

⁶The common name for the process of the transformation of the communist system in the USSR in 1985 - 1991. Initially, the perestroika (Russian word for restructuring) along with the slogans of glasnost (Russian - openness, transparency) and uskorenije (Russian - acceleration) constituted a symbol of a new political direction of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). It was initiated in 1985 by Mikhail Gorbachev after his taking the position of the secretary general of the CPSU Central Committee. Gorbachev set forth the basic principles of perestroika in his book titled: The restructuring and new thinking for our country and for the whole world, published in 1988. Its essence was the modernization of the economy, partial transformation into market-oriented economy, the increasing of civil liberties, and warming up the relationships with Western states.

⁷On the basis of the date of Kyrgyzstan's prison board, GUIN (General'noe upravlenie po ispolneniiu nakazanii).

oners in a colony, with a long period of service earns approximately US\$ 140, the chief of the colony - up to US\$ 200, and the deputy chief of GUIN earns US\$ 250 a month. You cannot live on those salaries; people work there because prison is sometimes the only institution providing jobs in the neighborhood.⁸

The difficult economic and organizational situation of the prison system was aggravated by the steady growth of the number of prisoners. Kyrgyzstan has a population of about 5 million people. As of January 1, 2006, there were 15 758 people in prison and Kyrgyzstan, with an index of imprisonment of 274 per 100 000 citizens, ranked 41st in the world. It has not always been like that. In 1999 there were approximately 23 000 prisoners and the index of imprisonment was 477 (cf. graph 1)⁹. The strict penal policy of the State constantly led to overpopulation in the penal colonies. In order to avoid substantial aggravation of the conditions of serving the sentence of imprisonment as well as radicalization of opinions in the penal colonies, amnesty was often declared.

In 2006, 2 500 employees of the penitentiary administration took care of 16 000 prisoners. GUIN, the entity managing the prison system, had nearly 300 employees, while colonies existed where staff shortages reached 50%. It happened that at a particular time there was one employee, or two, per 1 500 prisoners in the 'zone' (a separated place of living for prisoners in the colony). In the colonies, e.g. in Colony No. 19, there were two pairs of handcuffs per 380 prisoners, no batons and no tear gas. GUIN could not afford to equip all the employees with uniforms.¹⁰

In the Soviet times the prison system had not been monitored by State units. The prison administration had not been used to being watched all the time. After the demise of the USSR, the work discipline among the

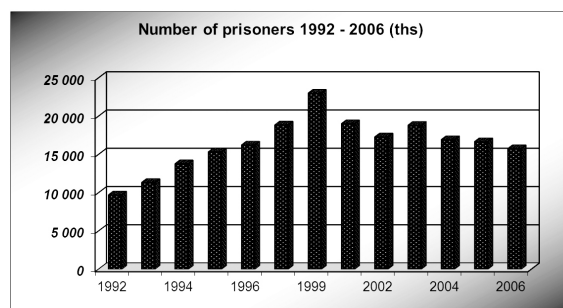


Fig. 1. Number of prisoners in Kyrgyzstan in 1992 – 2006 (in thousands)

penitentiary service weakened all the more, the corruption grew, mainly in the relationships with prisoners, and the morale of the prison service deteriorated. Since Kyrgyzstan regained independence in 2005, no review of jobs had been made and the prison payroll lists still contained the names of employees of the factories which had been already liquidated. After the enterprises located in the area of the penal colonies had gone bankrupt, their property was plundered. In the process of stock-taking in the prison sector, it had been found that the assets worth of 21 million som (US\$ 525 000) were missing. A branch of Prosecutor General's Office responsible for monitoring GUIN has revealed the extent of corruption at senior levels.¹¹

As a result of the prison system's having become poor, there was a rapid increase in tuberculosis infections among prisoners. In the prisons of Kyrgyzstan, the number of tuberculosis infections was 40 times higher than among society in general, and the death rate was 60 times higher¹². In 2004, 6,585 cases of tuberculosis infections were recorded in Kyrgyzstan's colonies and 669 prisoners died. In 2005, fewer cases of infections were recorded – 2 253 – but 728 people died.¹³

¹¹The problem of losses in assets of Kyrgyzstan's prison system has been broadly described in the press.

¹²In recent years, as a result of the aid provided by international organizations, a declining trend in tuberculosis infections in the Central Asian prisons has been recorded.

¹³To compare, according to the data of the Ministry of Health, in 1998 the number of people suffering from tuberculosis was 90 000, of which 820 persons died. And in 2005, 49 312 of people were reported suffering from tuberculosis, of which 55 died. On the basis of the data of Kyrgyzstan's

⁸On the basis of the data of Kyrgyzstan's prison board, GUIN (General'noe upravlenie po ispolneniiu nakazanii).

⁹See, Roy Wamsley, *World Prison Population*, 1st edition.

¹⁰Pienitencjarnaja sistema Kirgizji. Ed. Kirgiskoje-Amerykanskoje biuro pa prawam czelawieka i sbludnieniu zakonności. Bishkek, 2000.

As of October 1, 2004, 99 cases of HIV infection among prisoners were found.¹⁴ This accounted for 47.4% of all the cases of HIV in Kyrgyzstan. It is estimated that approximately 0.4% of the prison population were HIV positive (in 2005) – the estimate was made in a sample of 450 prisoners. In the colonies of Kyrgyzstan, there is no obligation to test for HIV. Sadly, as of January 1, 2006 there were 131 HIV cases recognized among the prisoners. 70% of them admitted to using heroin, which they injected. 21.2% of prisoners were suffering from syphilis – the testing was made in a sample of 450 convicts.¹⁵

Sexual issues were perceived by prisoners as follows: 0.2% of them claimed that all the prisoners have homosexual relations with others, while according to 1.3% of them the majority have homosexual relations, and 1.6% of them believe that half of them have such relations. Despite the availability of condoms, only 1% of the prisoners believe that all inmates use them. However, the basic way of satisfying sexual needs has been masturbation and rooms for family visits have been a more popular form of satisfying sexual needs than intercourse with another prisoner. Considering that prisoners have mobile phones and owing to the corruption present, it is quite possible for a prisoner to invite a prostitute to visit a colony. A prisoner may also become infected with syphilis and HIV via visit rooms, and also infect others.¹⁶

The situation has been disastrous due to hepatitis C. 40.5% of the prison population suffer from the disease, 44% of that number being men and 7% women. It is a common belief that this is a side-effect of drug use in the colonies. Drugs are used, with various frequency, by approximately 70% of the prisoners. Heroin is used most often, and intravenously, accounting for 80% of all drugs. Although nearly 60% of them declare that they use their own syringes only, the results of anonymous

research carried out in 2002 show that 70% to 80% of prisoners taking drugs use a non-disinfected syringe that has been used many times before. The needles used for making injections were in an even condition. When they became blunt as a result of frequent use, they were whetted with a stone and used so many times that only a stump was left of them, not fit for entering a vein. And sometimes, if no needles were available, heroin was injected intravenously using sharpened pen refills. And it was just due to those practices that nearly half of the prisoners suffered from hepatitis C and other ailments¹⁷.

On the other hand, as a consequence of '*glasnost*'¹⁸, that is the principle of openness as a feature of the functioning of State institutions, which means the obligation that State institutions undergo public review and submit to social control, the repressive nature of the penal colonies has diminished considerably. Repression, as a basic means of forcing work discipline on which the colony's organizational order was based, was no longer needed, because there was no work. Also, whenever it manifested itself in an illegal form, it was openly criticized by society and opposed by prisoners themselves, in the first place.

At the same time, however, by waiving the over-repressive function of penal colonies, the State stopped to control the observance of moral and legal standards for prisoners, and, thereby, failed to protect the fundamental social order among prisoners. The State ceased to care for prisoners' personal safety, ceased to protect the weaker against the stronger and to solve conflicts among them. The penitentiary administration stopped to exist as the creator of social order among prisoners.

Kyrgyzstan's prison system collapsed, not only in terms of economy, but also in terms of civilization. In the

prison management – GUIN).

¹⁴To compare, in Russia, according to the data of the Ministry of Health, 4 100 of prisoners were HIV virus carriers in 1999, 15 100 – in 2000 and 43 000 – in 2004.

¹⁵On the basis of the data of Kyrgyzstan's prison board, GUIN. (Glavnoye Upravlenie Ispelnienia Nakazani).

¹⁶On the basis of the data of Kyrgyzstan's prison board, GUIN./ ibid.

¹⁷ibidem. / On the basis of the data of Kyrgyzstan's prison board, GUIN.

¹⁸Transparency, openness – the element of Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms in 1985-1990, the idea of which was to disclose the facts relating to the USSR's political and economic situation and to reveal historical facts. Previously, such information had not been admitted for publication (censorship) and its disclosure, even in private conversation, could have brought repressions.

penal colonies there was a problem of permanent malnutrition. Hunger, unemployment and indolence among the prisoners, and their personal hygiene worsened dramatically. Poverty, illnesses and corruption began to rule, supervisors' morale went down. As regards satisfying their basic financial needs, prisoners could only rely on themselves and on financial support from their families. Therefore, parallel to the prison administration as a primary and lawful authority, another, „hidden authority” - an informal organization of prisoners in penal colonies - became powerful. And, in the end, in a series of protests in the penal colonies of Kyrgyzstan, **the prisoners challenged the legitimacy of the prison service to administer the colonies and organized crime took over the administration** of many segments of the colonies. The legitimacy of power in such institutions as penal colonies is based on the belief that the obedience results from the mere fact of the existence of statutory law. Yet, law defines not only the tasks and obligations to be performed by the subjects, but also those to be performed by the authority, in particular, its obligations to its subjects. If it does not do so, its legitimacy to keep power (exercise power) may be questioned by subjects – in this case, in prisoners' revolts.¹⁹

In summer 2002 the deputy director of the prison administration of Kyrgyzstan told me that „wsia wlast' poshla w ruki zakluchonyh” („all power has fallen into the prisoners' clutches”).²⁰ This meant that the power in the penal colonies was seized by an informal prisoners' organization, the so-called „obshchak”²¹, which

had survived in the Kyrgyz colonies as an imitation of the Soviet model. The organization was headed by one of the leaders of the underworld – so-called „thief by law” („vor v zakonie”).²² „Obshchak” – a specific association, a prison community, with its own code of ethics and law - is composed of the criminal elites of the penal colonies, imposing their power and behavior on other prisoners.²³ The „thief by law” status is awarded to those among declared criminals who willfully resigned from making a living honestly, who benefit from the fruits of somebody else's work, and who, in order to devote themselves to criminal activities, in order to lead the underworld, resigned from setting up a family and cultivating family ties.²⁴

In the penal colonies, each prisoner has to pay a „tax” to the „vor v zakonie” („thief by law”) and „obshchak”. Apart from that, taxes are collected on transactions made by the prisoners in the colonies. There are two „garnshki”²⁵ – banks, where money from 'taxation' of prisoners is collected: a part of that money goes to the bank belonging to the 'thief by law', the other part to the bank belonging to the „obshchaks”.

Since there was no work and the prisoners by themselves could not earn money, they gained it from families, illegal production, prison gambling, trade, and, first of all, from drug trade. All these transactions are taxable.

²²The 'thieves by law' organization functioned in the entire area of the USSR, and, what is important it continues to exist there after its demise. The grant of the status of a „thief by law” takes place during a convention of the „vor v zakonie” in Moscow. After Kyrgyzstan regained independence, one „thief by law” fell to it. He has been in a penal colony for years and he rules the underworld, both in the colonies and at large, from there. It is not a conjecture that the penitentiary administration in many penal colonies has co-operated with him. Many ties between the „obshchak” and the administration of the penal colonies were disclosed in the period when gen. S. Bajzakov performed the function of the chairman of the prison board. The problem has been discussed comprehensively in the Kyrgyz press – e.g. in the «Delo № ...» newspaper, issued in November and December 2011 – see: <http://delo.kg/>.

²³More on the informal organization of prisoners in penal colonies, see in: Abramkin W.F., Chosnokova W.F.: Ugolownaya Rossiya, tiurnyy i lageriya. T. I, Moscow 1993.

²⁴On the basis of talks with employees of the penitentiary administration and prisoners of the penal colonies in Kyrgyzstan.

²⁵„Garnshki” – pots, big mugs

¹⁹Legitimacy of an authority is based on social acceptance, a general belief that the wielding of power by specified entities is justifiable, legitimate. Even in prison, the authority has to perform the law-prescribed obligations to prisoners subordinated to it. If it does not do so, its legitimacy to wield power will be challenged. Cf. also: Max Weber: Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie, 1922.

²⁰The statement of the deputy director of GUIN, during the working seminar on the co-operation between the Non-governmental Organizations with the prison system of Kyrgyzstan – June, Issyk Kul 2002, organized by the Soros Foundation.

²¹„Obshchak” – comes from the word 'obshchatsya': to associate with, to maintain social contacts with, also from 'obshchina': a community, commune, and 'obshchestvo': a society, fellowship, association. „Obshchak” is a community, a group of persons staying in a penal colony, who have merit for the world of crime and support the „vor v zakonie” ideology.



The „vor v zakonie” („thief by law”) wields power over all the colonies, appointing his representative – „polozhenec”²⁶ (also called „smatriaschy”²⁷) – for each of them. The „polozhenec” exercises power in the colony on behalf of the „vor v zakonie” („thief by law”). The „polozhenec”, supported by „obshchaks”, sees to it that the order is obeyed and the rules among the prisoners observed, he settles any conflicts, ensures that transactions are made fairly, and collects taxes. Since the „vor v zakonie” („thief by law”) and „obshchaks” handle the drug business, which generates considerable income, the profits are invested in various undertakings, also outside the colony, bringing more profit. The trade within the colony is linked with that at large. The annual value of the drug market in the colonies is estimated to be more than US\$ 1 million. This money is used to aid and support the prisoners, and to be put in various prison ventures. With these funds the „obshchaks” buy additional food for themselves and for the prisoners, obtain medicines that are in demand as well as make overhauls of some facilities, such as recovery rooms, hospitals, residential premises, in the penal colonies. They cover the costs of transport of a sick prisoner to the hospital – if the administration has no money for it. They ‘attend’ to prisoner’s business in offices in town or with the prison’s administration by bribing the supervision. Briefly speaking, the „obshchaks” help the prisoners and the colony in matters that should be dealt with by the supervision. By corrupting the penitentiary administration, whose salaries are so low, they actually provide for them. Since corruption has existed within the administrative structure as among the superiors and subordinates, the ‘hidden authority’ of the prison helps members of the administration to get promoted, just buys offices and promotions for them.²⁸

So, the „hidden authority” in the Kyrgyz colonies is very strong. Its structure is definitely pyramidal. At the top of it, there stands the afore-mentioned „thief by law”. In each particular penal colony, the „vor v zakonie” („thief by law”) appoints one of the „obshchak” as a so-called „polozhenec” who wields power in the colony on his behalf. As a rule, in all penal colonies, the nominee for „polozhenec” is elected by prisoners who recognize the principles of the „vor v zakonie” ideology, from among themselves. The „vor v zakonie” may, but does not have to, agree to such nominee. He himself may, ignoring the „obshchak”, appoint „polozhenec” in particular penal colonies. Then, at a special meeting (so-called „shodka obshchaka”), the „polozhenec” establishes successive ranks of power and appoints selected prisoners to those positions – first of all, the so-called „smotriashche-dvizency”, the prisoners looking after and managing, in accordance with the „thief by law” ideology, the particular spheres of penal colony’s life such as work posts, dispensaries, canteens and kitchens, etc. Thus, a „polozhenec”, that is the one who looks after the zone (also called the „smatriaschy za zonoj”), appoints particular prisoners to the positions in the prison community depending on their merits in pursuing the „vor v zakonie” ideas. At the bottom of the pyramid there are common prisoners.²⁹

A significant part of common prisoners are prisoners addicted to alcohol or drugs. Prisoner addicts are positively viewed by the elite. Although many „obshchaks” use drugs, they treat the prisoners in whom the symptoms of addiction are noticeable, as an inferior category. Addiction indicates that a man „is not his own man”, „is

²⁶ „Polozhenec” – from the word ‘polozit’: to put down, to place. „Polozhenec” is, thus, a person ‘placed, appointed’ to a particular social position in the ‘prison community’.

²⁷ „Smatriaschy” – from the word ‘smotriet’: look, inspect, look after, keep watch. „Smotriashchy” is, thus, a person looking after something, keeping watch on something, responsible for a section of penal colonies entrusted to him.

²⁸ Many of the relations of such type between the organized crime world and the administration of the prison camps had been revealed by gen. S. Bayzakov in the period when he fulfilled the function of the chairman of

the General Directorate for the Execution of Punishment (GSIN) in 2012 – see footnote 3. “I fired 80 percent of prison directors, because over the past few years, they created corrupt schemes and forged alliances with the criminal world,” said Bayzakov, who was appointed to the post last year. “They laundered money and instead of buying normal food, they would buy rotten and expired goods and just kept the money for themselves. Bayzakov said several former prison directors were facing prosecution for alleged crimes that include running the prison drug trade. – see <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/international/mafia-blamed-for-kyrgyz-prisoners-sewn-lips-protest/494520>

²⁹ At the very bottom, there are the prisoners who have been condemned and marginalized by the prison community – they include, most often, stool pigeons, homosexuals or prisoners used as homosexual prostitutes. On the basis of the talks with the penitentiary administration employees and the prisoners of the prison camps in Kyrgyzstan.

not able to represent himself", „cannot be relied on", is not trustworthy. Many of them are in cold withdrawal, have debts and look for drugs desperately. To repay their debts and get a drug they are able to do a lot. They may become handy executors of a „dirty job", like injuries and assassinations, ordered by the „obshchak". A drug addict who is in cold withdrawal adds power to the „obshchak"; he supports their menacing, ruthless nature.

II. Counteracting, treating and monitoring drug-addiction in the penal colonies: the „Clean Zone" project.

1. The prison administration, and the prisoners alike, experience a somewhat absurd situation: Someone has been sentenced for drug possession. He is serving a sentence in a prison where there is a strong "hidden authority". Neither he nor anyone else will be put in prison for possessing drugs here. This is why prisoners feel they can go unpunished and the officers feel helpless, which is actually tantamount to the „legalization" of drugs in prison, or at least to the „suspension" of the law in force. The prison administration pose a question to themselves: if drug possession is punished by imprisonment, how to punish the same thing while being already in prison? If a drug-addict cannot be punished by being removed from prison, then, other ways of solving the problem must be sought for. And those were, primarily, the reasons for which the administration got interested in and accepted our program.

„Suspension of war" against drug addicts and against drug-addiction – as an enemy, in the penal colonies of Kyrgyzstan, in favor of a different approach, i.e. viewing drug addiction as an illness, evoked interest in and a favorable attitude of the administration to our program, and was a good ground for developing and implementing our „Clean Zone" program.

2. At the turn of the century, in the Kyrgyz colonies, marihuana and heroin were commonly traded. Whoever had money or other goods capable of being exchanged for drugs, did not have any problem with

purchasing them. Approximately 70% of the prison population consider themselves drug addicts. The others have had an occasional contact or no contact at all with any drug, but it was their choice and not because of lack of access to drugs. The so-called „razgon" was a symbol of that freedom of access to drugs and of their use. Several times a year, on various occasions, which were important for the criminal circles, for instance on the „thief's by law" birthday or on one of the national holidays, the „thief by law" announced a „razgon". He ordered his people, in all the colonies, to distribute among the prisoners some of the stored-up stocks of drugs and alcohol. Anyone who wanted it, approached his people and received a free share of alcohol or drugs. So, on the occasion of a holiday, he treated the inmates to alcohol and drugs.³⁰

For many prisoners it was „their first time" and the beginning of their road to drug addiction. The circumstances under which drugs (mainly heroin) were used, especially for the first time, were extremely „unprofessional", unhygienic, and the knowledge of drug-related hazards to human health was very scant.

Therefore, since we were dealing with a situation of a universal access to drugs by prisoners, the only response to that could be a system of universal prevention of drug abuse in the penitentiary system. The universal character of such prevention was to express itself in an access to a range of various means and methods of preventing drug abuse and in covering the entire penitentiary system of Kyrgyzstan with a drug prevention program.

Due to suspension of war against drug abuse, in addition to the programs hitherto applied by the administration, such as controlling drug inflow to the colonies, informing about the effects of drugs on the human being, detoxification, prescribing medicinal preparations, it also became possible to implement various psychotherapeutic, social and „harm

³⁰On the basis of the talks with the penitentiary administration employees and the prisoners of the penal colonies in Kyrgyzstan.

reduction" programs such as the „needle and syringe exchange" program and the „methadone program".³¹

The task was to cause the creation of Rehabilitation Centers (RCs) in all of the eleven closed penal colonies that existed in Kyrgyzstan.³² Those centers were places of treatment for prisoners addicted to alcohol and/or drugs, who volunteered to go there. The therapy for prisoners addicted to alcohol lasted 3 months and for drug-addicts – 4 to 6 months. The persons treated in an RC and declaring their wish to continue the therapy were to be directed to one of the two separated penal colonies (or separated areas in the colonies) – so-called Rehabilitation and Social Adjustment Centre (RSAC). A stay in the Centre (called the Clean Zone) was a specific form of continuing treatment and serving the prison sentence. The Clean Zone was an attempt at combining the concept of a therapeutic community with the requirements of a prison camp. Considering good prospects for their recovery and their preparation for the life at large, patients of the Clean Zone had much greater chances to leave the penal colony on probation or to be transferred to an open-type of prison. It was assumed that patients' families should participate in preparing them for the life at large. Likewise, the existing and emerging social organizations of recovered drug users and persons addicted to alcohol should have an opportunity to take part in such preparations. The Clean Zone should be the place where recovered drug users and persons addicted to alcohol

living „at large" could provide assistance and support to prisoner-patients. That is why programs of work with patients' families and of work with representatives of social associations engaged in assisting people addicted to drugs and alcohol have been included in the RSAC's program of work. RSAC's patients, after leaving prison, were to find assistance and support from those associations and/or the family.

3. Organized crime in the penal colonies has always been strong and its power lied, in the first place, in the specific character of a penal colony (i.e. prison camp), which is quite different from that of a cell prison. To show these differences on a model, one can say that if we have a prison for 1 000 people and each person sits in a separate cell, it is sufficient to have an officer with keys to all the cells to control the relationships among the prisoners. In a penal colony for 1 000 people, one officer, if he has not fled, can only become one of those 1 000 people staying there – he can only come to an agreement with them, not supervise them. A penal colony, in this sense, is a prison where 1 000 prisoners stay in one cell. In European cell prisons, 1 officer falls to 1 to 3 prisoners and in penal colonies – to 100 and more prisoners. This means that in penal colonies, generally, the administration has very limited possibilities to monitor and control the relationships among prisoners. In fact, it has no control as to whether the relations in which prisoners enter into among themselves comply with law and it does not react to the situations where law is violated – this means that the rule of law as a regulator of social relationships is nonexistent there. Thereby, the administration does not provide any legal order for the prison community. Social life does not tolerate any vacuum; the „hidden authority" of prisoners as such always enters that empty space, establishing its own rules in the colonies and watching that they are obeyed.

The administration and the organized crime compete with each other for that space of social demand for the „hidden authority" in the penal colonies. The administration has initiated so-called operational work in the penal colonies. Namely, it searches for agents among

³¹ The programs relating to the techniques and methods of monitoring the inflow of drugs to prisons and of „harm reduction" were not subject of our direct interest, but they were recommended to the penitentiary administration of Kyrgyzstan and demonstrated during the study visits in Polish prisons. Initial recommendations relating to the need of preventing drug abuse by a comprehensive approach (including 'needle and syringe exchange' and 'methadone') have been presented to the deputy Minister of Justice – see footnote 3.

³² In 2004, GUIN's jurisdiction includes 35 penal establishments. Eleven are "strict-regime" prison camps or "colonies", including one each for women, male minors and members of the law enforcement agencies, such as the MIA, the National Security Service (Sluzhba natsional'noy bezopasnosti, or SNB) and the prosecutor general's office. GUIN is also responsible for eighteen "settlement colonies" (kolonii-poseleniya); their inmates can leave during the day, provided they return at night. Finally, GUIN controls investigative detention facilities (sledstvennye izolyatory, or SIZO), of which there are five, including one for women.

prisoners, substituting in this way for the shortage of staff and the performance of tasks which it should perform in order to provide safety to prisoners and to secure legal order. Through such agents it tries to recognize what is going on in the prison community and, based on that recognition, to properly react to events taking place in the colonies.

The world of organized crime is better rooted in the prisoner community, closer to prisoners and in the same situation as the community is. Unlike informers, it does not need to conceal its identity or intent. It has introduced a principle that the prison community always refuses to cooperate with the administration, and if informants are found, they are object of disgrace and rejection. It acts openly and, definitely, wins in the situation where the administration has lost its legitimacy to administer. It introduces its own „protection“ of the prisoner against prison „injustice“, which it understands in its specific way, and levies a tax on such prisoners for this purpose. However, the social world of the penal colonies is the world of individuals who invigilate one another in various regards, it is the world of suspicion and limited confidence in others.

Because of invigilation of the prison community by the administration – on the one part, and by the „obshchak“ – on the other, the psychological therapy, both individual and in groups, based on human communication, i.e. the exchange of words and emotions, and not on medication, has for long been considered impossible in that world. Openness to others and the possibility of disclosing one's inner world, necessary in such therapy, was not given. This was one of the most important problems to be solved when launching the program of alcohol and drug treatment. And for that reason:

The administration's operational intelligence should not be conducted in the CR and RSAC;

The administration was to secure patients against „tax“ collection;

The RC and RSAC were to be physically separated from the area of the colony in which prisoners stayed;

In the event of emergency (e.g. in the event of mutiny and other threats of aggression on the part of prisoners), the patients of the RC and RSAC were to be covered by an evacuation plan.

During their stay in the RC and the RSAC patients' physical and mental safety was to be secured. The administration of the penal colonies of Kyrgyzstan accepted all those conditions. Considering that, if the forgoing conditions were to be fulfilled, treatment centers could not be created within the so-called „zone“, i.e. the social environment of a penal colony. The CADAP program helped to create such treatment centers outside the „zone“.

Patients addicted to drugs, treated or „half-treated“ in the prison hospital or infirmary, usually returned, later on, to the same environment and were exposed to the temptations of drug use, which were easy to satisfy. Many a time they were put to pressure by the social environment of the „zone“ and started taking drugs anew. They had no opportunity to continue the initial treatment, to break a vicious circle of addiction and to leave the prison earlier. For those who really wanted to kick the habit, there should be a space created for living and treatment at the penal colonies, isolated from the rest of the prison community. CADAP contributed to financing the repairs of facilities to be seats of the Rehabilitation Centers and financed the Rehabilitation and Social Adjustment Centre, the first center of its kind in the penal colonies of Eurasia – popularly called the „Clean Zone“.

4. So far, we have discussed the conditions and organization of universal, effective and cheap therapy in the penal colonies. But what is therapy to be like in a prison system that struggles with financial problems as much as that of Kyrgyzstan? What is therapy to be like in the situation where the prison system of Kyrgyzstan is not based on the cell system, because there is only one cell there, the ZONE, in which all pris-



oners stay together, and in the situation where the organization of the RC and the RSAC does not break ties with this custom? If a stay in such penal colonies is not to be more expensive, not to involve any increase in employment, which is also expensive, then, what is this program to be like as not to create a „hidden authority“ again and not to subject the RC and RSAC to its all-embracing system in the penal colonies.

To avoid those dangers, we have proposed to implement the „Atlantis“ program in the Rehabilitation Centers. „Atlantis“ is the Alcoholics Anonymous' „12 steps“ program adapted to prison conditions – the so-called Minnesota model used in the in-patient health care system, also in the Polish prison system.³³

Alcohol addiction and drug addiction are recognized as problems of the same kind, requiring similar treatment. With regard to the situation existing in the penal colonies, an important aspect is that a person addicted to drugs staying in the RC or in the RSAC, is a member of a self-aid group whose purpose it is to help the members of the community to overcome addiction, by consistently applying a set of recommendations and by the participant's exchanging experiences with other participants. ***In the course of treatment, a group of people emerges who, by living in close contact with one another, quickly learn about their inner lives, gain special knowledge about the illness and its preconditions, develop specific rules and concepts, create a language to describe and control their problems and other issues. In practice, it turns out that the group develops a specific social culture that is alternative to that of the „obshchak“'s.***

Few members of the staff organize, manage and monitor the treatment process. Considering the general economic weakness of the „penal colony“ type of penitentiary system, the treatment model based on „12 steps“ seems to be optimal. Naturally, in the future,

the competences and professional skills of the RC staff should be further developed and expanded to include other methods of addiction therapy.

In the RC, treatment of drug addicts takes 4 to 6 months. In a way, isolation, which is the state experienced by a prisoner-patient in the Rehabilitation Centre, is conducive to the treatment process. When living in isolation, a patient is under strict surveillance. He is not exposed to the temptation of an easy access to drugs. He can be positively motivated to treatment by the fact that it is a useful way of passing the time in prison (considering that the lack of work and idleness are major problems of prison life). However, after undergoing treatment under the „Atlantis“ program, the problem of controlling one's addiction remains, and it is particularly difficult in prison, which is an institution generating, by nature, stress and in which the patient-prisoner is likely to stay for a couple of more years. That is why the „Atlantis“ patients are offered a further stay in a penal colony called the „Clean Zone“, which is intended to be a therapeutic community at the same time. The term „Clean Zone“ refers to a specific style of functioning of the entire penal colony, by applying the principle of open communication and, to the extent possible, setting up democratic relations at all levels of its structure, and using the therapeutic potential in all the members of the therapeutic team, the patients and in their mutual relationships.³⁴

Also, patients' families and representatives of the associations of former drug addicts and persons addicted to alcohol are engaged in the activities of the „Clean Zone“ therapeutic community.

5. The treatment programs (which do not use typical medical therapy methods and means): individual and group therapy, social work, work with prisoners' fami-

³³ This program and its origin is discussed comprehensively by Tatiana Kovaliova in a further chapter of this book.

³⁴ The Clean Zone program is discussed comprehensively in this book by Irina Lapuzina. The author, who is the organizer and director of the Clean Zone, utilized the experiences of the Polish „Monar“ organization in creating the model of a therapeutic community in the penal colony. More on the concept of a „therapeutic community“ cf. Maxwell Jones, *The Therapeutic Community: A New Treatment Method in Psychiatry*. 1953, New York: Basic Books.

lies and social organizations, etc. were completely new methods of work with prisoners for the penitentiary administration. So far, a short visit to the detoxification ward and attending a lecture on the harmfulness of alcohol had been enough to execute a court order to undergo treatment while in prison, and now a nearly half-yearly stay in the center and treatment under the Atlantis program did not do so. Therefore, it was necessary for the penitentiary administration to procure legal changes that would allow these new procedures to be applied in working with prisoners. This required also changes to be made in the organizational structure of the prison system, thanks to which the institutions of the Rehabilitation Centre and the Rehabilitation and Social Adjustment Centre and all other changes necessary for their organization could be made and established as a permanent element of the penitentiary system of Kyrgyzstan.

All the above-mentioned methods of preventing drug abuse have been institutionalized. They evolved from non-formal methods of action in the organization under a pilot program to regulated or permanent forms of activity, subject to organizational sanctions. The existing forms of combating drug addiction have been given the status of an institution, thanks to which the „Clean Zone” program has become an obligatory and permanent element of the penitentiary system of Kyrgyzstan.

6. In connection with the implementation of the „Clean Zone” program and its institutionalization by the penitentiary administration, a question might be asked about the positive effects of such implementation for Kyrgyzstan. They are as follows:

a/ unquestionably, it has been some time now that RC's and RSAC's patients have been leaving the penal colonies and not returning to crime and drugs;³⁵

b/ a less measurable, but quite appropriate indication of success is the contribution of the „Clean Zone” program to the regaining of legitimacy by the administrative authority in the penitentiary system of Kyrgyzstan. Even in the penal colonies, the authority must perform its law-prescribed obligations to subordinate prisoners - otherwise its legitimacy would be challenged. During the mutiny in Penal Colony No. 3, in summer 2005, the leader of the mutiny prohibited to devastate and rob one facility only. It was the facility where the „Atlantis” program was conducted. In a short justification he stated before the rebellious prisoners that „it is the only thing here that has been done for us” and the employees serving the „Atlantis” program, unlike others, have not been driven away from the colony;

c/ Colony No. 31 accommodates a hospital for tuberculosis treatment. Also, it houses a Rehabilitation Centre. For years, prisoners with cured tuberculosis have participated in the „Atlantis” program. There have been cases of patients treated under „Atlantis” who, at the same time, were cured of tuberculosis, carried the HIV virus and were addicted to heroin. Dealing with such cases by the penitentiary system just enhances the administration's legitimacy, strengthens and stabilizes its authority.

If the administration had not taken care of them, the „hidden authority” of the penal colonies would. In this obvious way, the „hidden authority” could have used them as a „weapon”, to punish enemies with lethal infections. It could have used them as tools in the fight against, for instance, the administration. The „Clean Zone” program has, then, its share in improving the state of safety in the penal colonies;

d/ if one could “get treatment going” in all the penal colonies, i.e. „prompt the influx” of patients from the colonies to the Rehabilitation Centers in the colonies, and, next, their „migration” from the Centers to the „Clean Zone”, and,

³⁵Tatiana Kovalova and Irina Lapuzina describe this in a further chapter of the book.



after that, to their families or the associations of former drug addicts and persons addicted to alcohol, then, along with a throng of „migrating“ recovered users, the money which they would not spend on the illegal market of drug trading would „leave“ prisons. In 2005, we calculated that since in e.g. Colony No. 3 there were 25 beds for patients requiring treatment and the treatment lasts 6 months, treatment could be provided to 50 (25+25) people a year. As a rule, the patients were heavy drug users who consumed a big portion („dose“) of heroin a day, worth of (on the market of a penal colony) nearly US\$ 2. This means that we would take off US\$ 18 250 (25x2x365) of the market, as regards just one penal colony. And if such treatment centers were established in 10 colonies and if, next, patients went from those colonies to the „Clean Zone“, then, one could say that over US\$ 180 000 annually would „leave“ the market estimated to be worth of over US\$ 1 million. This shows the actual potential that lies in that market and the position of the organized crime in the penal colonies which backs up that market.

7. Two other programs were considered desirable to be implemented in the penal colonies under the „Clean Zone“ program: a „needle and syringe exchange“ program³⁶ (obmienny shpryts) and a „methadone“ program. Both programs have been recommended to the prison administration.

The program of syringe exchange was interesting to us not only for the reason of dispensing needles and syringes to reduce HIV and other infections by injection.

The program was carried out in the prison environment, by drug abusers, and in this way, it brought the addicts closer to the therapist, the Rehabilitation Centers, medical aid. For the administration, it was a convenient way to find out about the size of the drug addicts population, to monitor the level of drug abuse, and, what is the most important, it created a chance to reach the drug addicts with an offer of treatment and to take them out of the drug market. The first syringe dispensing and exchanging point was set up in 2002 in one colony only. Initially, 50 prisoners took part in the program. Gradually, the program was introduced in other colonies. In 2005 it covered 10 colonies and 1 500 people participated in it. Yet, more than 20% of prisoners claimed that they disinfected the syringes. This means, however, that they used the same needle and syringe (their own or taken from somebody else) many times. As many as 33% of prisoners admitted that they used a generally accessible syringe, which, along with the previous category of prisoners, accounts for almost one half of drug users who apply drugs in a high risk manner, as a result of which they may get inflicted. In addition to that, 6.7% of the prisoners admitted they applied drugs in another way, e.g. by using a pen refill.

The methadone program was an offer to the prisoners characterized by heavy drug use. Methadone is a heroin substitute and it alleviates the consequences of its discontinuance. By offering methadone the administration could also reveal and monitor persons who were most desperate in their search for getting the drug and who, for this reason, were most dangerous in the hands of organized crime. Furthermore the methadone program represented a means to reach prisoners for treatment, to stabilize them and to avert negative health consequences such as HIV and HCV infections or overdose. Thanks to methadone, the administration had a „drug“ to offer, an alternative to heroin. And, thereby, it could curb the alternative power of the drug market in the penal colonies.³⁷

³⁶The underlying reason for the launch of the program of needle and syringe exchange was that addicts' access to clean injection equipment contributes to the reduction of the number of new HIV and other infections. The objective of the program is to reach the greatest number of persons taking drugs by way of injection (intravenously) and to give them sterile, disposable needles and syringes. The equipment is given for free. Medical employees hold special containers designated for collecting the used injection equipment. After it is filled up, the container is destroyed in the sanitary waste incinerator. In this way, the program contributes to reducing the number of dirty needles and syringes which may pose an accidental threat to other people.

³⁷The „methadone“ program is implemented in penal colony No.47(Bishkek), Remand Centre №1(Bishkek) and Remand Centre №5 (Osh). The program

At the bottom line, the „syringe exchange” program and the „methadone” program were compatible with the „Clean Zone” program in that they reduced the power of the drug market in the colonies. They became tools of combating, treatment and controlling drug abuse – clearing the penal colonies from drugs.

9. As a part of the universal system of drug prevention in the penal colonies, Rehabilitation Centers should be established in a few more colonies. Certainly, a RSAC should be set up in the penal colony in Jalalabad and another one in the only penal colony for women in the north of the country.

The most important thing to do in order to fully institutionalize the „Clean Zone” is to create a center responsible for inspection and substantial supervision over the RCs and the RSACs within GSIN (Gasudarstviennaya Sluzba Ispolnieniya Nakazaniy).³⁸ This center should be also responsible for staff instruction and ensuring staff continuity in RCs and RSACs.

The designed system of actions aimed at drug reduction in the penal colonies in Kyrgyzstan, presented

in this chapter, has been implemented since 2004. A more detailed description of the changes taking place in the Kyrgyz penitentiary system and of the conditions in which the system functions (Chapter I) is delivered in this book by Olga Stepkevitch, press-secretary of GSIN. The consequences for the penitentiary system of Kyrgyzstan of overpopulation in the penal colonies (Chapter II) as well as the strategies of drug prevention in the Kyrgyz penitentiary system after the country regained independence (Chapter III) are discussed by Kalybek Kachkynaliyev, advisor to the Chairman of GSIN. In Chapter IV of this book Tatiana Kovaliova, director of the Rehabilitation Centre in Penal Colony No. 3, describes the „Atlantis” program run in the Rehabilitation Centers at penal colonies No. 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 27, 31 and 47. She presents the organization of their work and the hitherto achieved results. Irina Lapuzina, director of the Rehabilitation Centre and Social Adjustment depicts the organization, functioning and results of work of the „Clean Zone” in colony No.31 (Chapter V). Madina Tokombayeva, chairwoman of the „Network for the Reduction of Damage” Foundation, writes about the assistance given to the „Atlantis” and „Clean Zone” patients in preparing them for leaving the penal colonies and about the aid extended to them when at large (Chapter VI). The final chapter has been written by Aleksander Zelichenko, national coordinator of CADAP V.

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³⁸GSIN (Gasudarstviennaya Sluzba Ispolnieniya Nakazaniy) is the present name of former GUIN (Glavnoye Upravlenie Ispolnieniya Nakazaniy).

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