

*Russia world's 3rd largest market of narcotic substances.*

MOSCOW January 18, 2011 (Itar-Tass) — Russia has the world's third largest market of narcotic substances after Europe and the U.S., Pino Arlacchi, the European parliament's rapporteur on the problem of drugs trafficking and the designer of the EU's new strategy for fighting with drug abuse. As regards the number of drugs addicts, Russia has reached parity with Western Europe and has turned into the world's third largest market of drugs and substances over the past eight years.

Arlacchi called for raising the status of alertness over this problem with the aid of the UN and equating it to the threat to peace.

He said he will present a special report to the EU where he will state plainly that production of drugs is one of the main sources of rebel and terrorist activities.

Arlacchi said that there was no amassed production of drugs in Afghanistan when NATO came there at the end of 2001 and Taliban did not produce either heroin or opium, as it felt the world community's pressure in that field.

Still, the volumes of production snowballed year after year in the war-torn country and reached a level where Afghanistan became the world's major producer of heroin, he said.