

# Afghanistan: The World's Largest Opium Producer

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Global Research, June 25, 2017

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Theme: [Science and Medicine](#)

In-depth Report: [AFGHANISTAN](#)

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*Opium is used to produce heroin and other illicit opioids.*

In his book titled "The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade," **Alfred McCoy** documented CIA and US government complicity in drugs trafficking at the highest official levels.

It continues today in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, South and Central America, facilitating the global supply of illicit drugs.

**Peter Dale Scott** explained

"(s)ince at least 1950 there has been a global CIA-drug connection operating more or less continuously" to this day.

"The global drug connection is not just a lateral connection between CIA field operatives and their drug-trafficking contacts."

"It is more significantly a global financial complex of hot money uniting prominent business, financial and government, as well as underworld figures," a sort of "indirect empire (operating alongside) existing government."

Heroin and other illicit drugs produce hundreds of billions of dollars in annual revenues - a US government-supported bonanza for corrupt regime officials in various countries, the CIA, organized crime and Western financial institutions, heavily involved in money laundering.

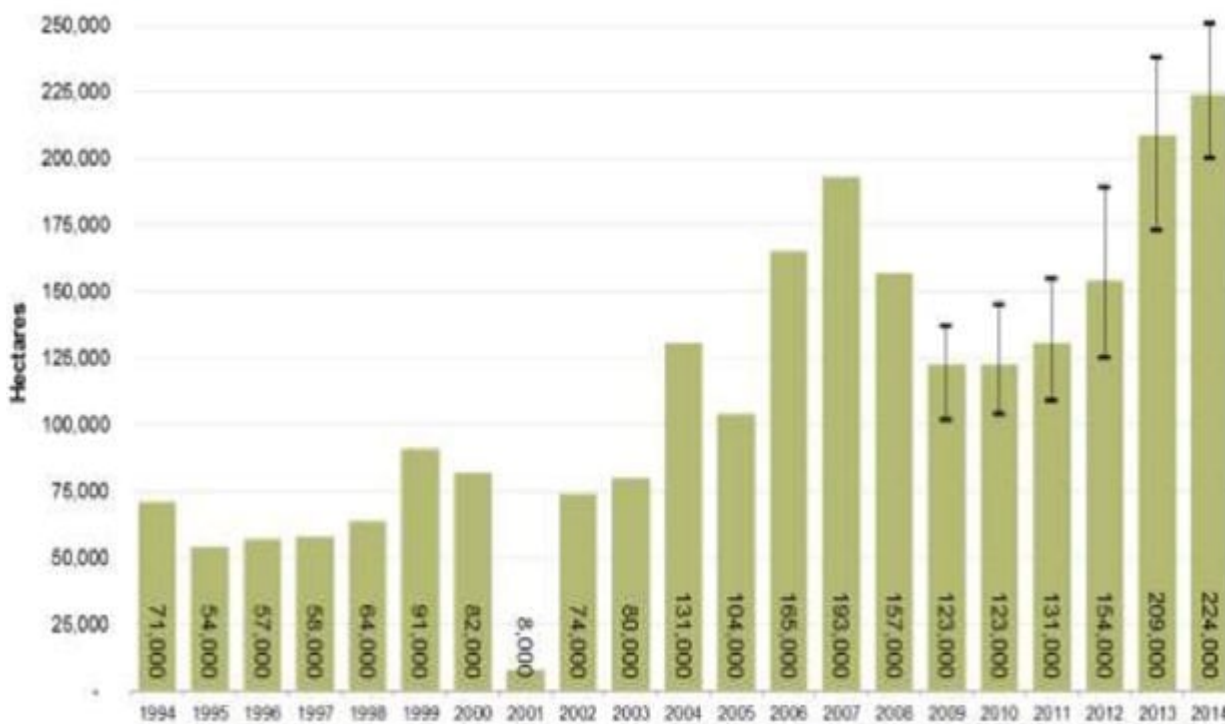
America is one of numerous countries involved, the most harmful and disturbing because of its imperial power and global reach, influencing or affecting virtually everything worldwide.

The CIA relies on involvement in drugs trafficking for a significant amount of its revenues.

Pre-9/11, Afghanistan under Taliban rule eradicated 94% of opium production according to UN estimates, one of various reasons why Bush/Cheney launched naked aggression on the country in October 2001.

One of the objectives was increasing opium production. Afghanistan was transformed into the world's largest producer - at one point growing more than total global demand, now accounting for at least 90%.

**Figure 1: Opium cultivation in Afghanistan, 1994-2014 (Hectares)**



Only a tiny fraction of what's produced remains in-country, the rest supplying demand worldwide.

Illicit drugs trafficking is big business – complicit governments cashing in along with money-laundering Wall Street and other big banks, traffickers, and rogue agencies like the CIA.

As long as Afghanistan remains occupied under US-installed puppet rule, opium production will flourish, vitally needed eradication steps ruled out.

RT interviewed **Layla Haidari**, founder of a Kabul “Mother” organization, helping drug addicts.

“Every day, it is getting worse, not better,” she said. “It’s politics. The ministries, the politicians...want poppy cultivation to continue.”

Corrupt Afghan officials like their counterparts elsewhere profit hugely from illicit trafficking, not about to give up a good thing.

Nor will the CIA and major Western banks end a lucrative source of revenues – the human cost of these drugs of no consequence in their decision-making.

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