

UN report ratifies Colombia as world's top cocaine producing country



Colombia concentrates 40 percent of its coca production in border areas, according to the UNODC report. | Photo: El Tiempo

United Nations, July 31 (RHC)-- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (Unodc) in Colombia once again placed that country as the first cocaine producer in the world, according to the 2020 report published by the organization.

The document states that Colombia's border areas with Venezuela concentrate the largest volume of drug crops, with Norte de Santander (northeast) being the department with the largest planted area with 40,084

hectares, despite a 4 percent reduction in cultivation.

This region surpassed for the first time Nariño, bordering Ecuador, as the department with the largest area under coca cultivation in the country, after registering 30,751 hectares planted.

The text specifies that the border territories present favorable conditions for the sowing of coca leaf and "its linkage with the other links in the international drug trafficking chain".

Hence, 40 percent of the coca produced in 2020 is related to border areas; and there has been an upward trend since 2010, when only 1,700 hectares were reported to have been planted.

Planting and production have been consolidated on the borders with Ecuador and Venezuela, where they report an upturn in armed conflicts, driven by drug trafficking and illegal mining, after the signing of the Peace Agreements between the Colombian government and the former insurgent group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - People's Army (FARC-EP) in 2016.

Last June 9, Unodc revealed data on illicit crop monitoring in 2020, showing an 8 percent growth in cocaine production (1,228 tons), with a 7 percent reduction associated with sown crops, 143,000 hectares.

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