

## Media Releases 2010

### 32kg seizure of Khat continues a busy week for SARS Customs Officials

**Pretoria, 04 March 2010** – The South African Revenue Service's (SARS) Customs detector dogs and handlers at OR Tambo International seized 32kg of Khat with an estimated street value of R4, 1 million on Monday afternoon. Khat contains cathinone which is similar to ephedrine and is classified as a narcotic in South Africa, therefore prohibited.

SARS Customs detector dogs reacted positively to the Khat consignment which was detected before it could be loaded onto a Cape Town bound cargo flight. This is the second largest Khat seizure by customs officials who last month seized 72kg of Khat with an estimated street value of R9, 1 million. Monday's seizure is the third narcotic success that customs officials have recorded in the past week around the country.

Within the seven day period, customs officials stationed at ORTIA seized 12,5kg of heroin valued at R10, 6 million from the cargo shed of an international carrier concealed in hand bound books. Customs officials operating at Cape Town International (CIA) seized 9.8kg of Cannabis destined for the United Kingdom at the Cape Mail centre with an estimated street value of R14 700.

The compressed blocks of cannabis were concealed in printer cartridges with the compressed blocks covered with a substance that officials suspect was used to disguise the odour. A smaller seizure of 220g of heroin valued at R187 000 was also conducted by Cape based officials. The combined value of all seizures totalled just under R15 million.

While no arrests have been made on all the reported cases, SARS Customs has handed the cases over to the South African Police Service (SAPS) who are continuing with further investigations.

SARS Customs will continue to cooperate with the SAPS and other law enforcement agencies in order to ensure that individuals who act outside of the law are brought to justice.

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