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**INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE
CONTROL COMMISSION**

CICAD

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**REMARKS OF INCOMING CHAIR NOMINEE DAVID MINETA
DEMAND REDUCTION GROUP OF EXPERTS ON DEMAND REDUCTION**

December 7, 2010

CICAD 48:

Demand Reduction Experts' Group: Remarks of Incoming Chair Nominee David Mineta

Thank you, it's an honor to be here today.

After hearing the Government of Mexico's report on the Expert Group's accomplishments last year, I am even more honored to be selected as the incoming Chair. My own background is in community drug abuse prevention and recovery work in the San Francisco Bay area. Today, I work on reducing the demand for drugs in the U.S. and to further President Obama's *National Drug Control Strategy*. So naturally, I am excited about the possibility of also contributing to reducing drug use and its consequences internationally, through CICAD.

Let me begin by stating that one of the most important resources we have to advance our shared goal of reducing the global demand for drugs is CICAD and the progress it facilitates. The CICAD Experts Group, I believe, is the catalyst for much of that progress.

I believe this for two reasons. First, national experts and CICAD staff have years of research, academic, and policy implementation experience, as well as personal contacts throughout the hemisphere. This makes the Experts Group an indispensable resource not normally available to single country representatives.

Second, the Experts Group has set a course, as a result of their work in preparation for Guadalajara and the resolution adopted there, that will significantly improve the capacity of member states to develop and implement effective drug demand reduction programs most relevant and useful to the diverse needs of our members.

I was pleased to read in the conclusions of the Experts Group meeting in Guadalajara, for example, the recommendation that treatment models be tailored to the circumstances of particular at-risk populations and to the context in which drug abuse is encountered. This common-sense approach will streamline our ability to reduce demand, and spur us to focus on advancing programs and policies supported at the local level, where they are implemented, and where they make the biggest impact on our citizens. As someone who has worked on prevention programs at the local level, I can tell you this is critical, because in order to be successful, every policy and

program must become independently sustainable and accepted as worthwhile in the community in which it serves.

We also know there is no single solution that represents the best use of resources for every country in the hemisphere. Different levels of development, citizen security, and the degree of government presence and capacity make this impossible. In fact, even within countries, regional differences, urban and rural divisions, and political circumstances may make it impossible to rapidly and effectively implement national-level programs.

In the United States, for example, we have learned community-based treatment and prevention programs are the best at defining local problems and aligning available resources to address them.

I was also pleased the Experts recommended treatment programs be fully integrated, stating, “treatment systems for problems associated with drug consumption should offer a continuum that allows drug users to move through every phase of treatment to reinsertion in the community.”

I recognize there are places in our hemisphere where security challenges or resource constraints prevent our member states from providing integrated treatment services that flow from prevention and screening to community reinsertion. And successful programs like drug courts, which use judicial supervision to save lives and reduce drug demand, may not be viable everywhere. However, the recognition that the integration of prevention and treatment is ideal is important, and I’m pleased that the Experts have reached that conclusion as well.

I look forward with great enthusiasm to fully using the resources and potential the Experts Group has to offer, and to working with many of you in the course of the year. Thank you for your time and this opportunity to introduce myself.