



Organization of  
American States

## **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO OFFICE**

**“Sub-Regional Seminar on the role of Research in the Development of Effective Policy in  
the Field of Drug Abuse and Prevention”**

*Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, October 29, 2014*

**Opening Remarks by Dr. Riyad Insanally, OAS Representative, Trinidad and Tobago**

Mr. Carl Francis, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Security of Trinidad  
and Tobago

Mr. Gérard Latulippe, High Commissioner of Canada

Mr. Trevor Percival, Chairman, National Drug Council (NDC) of Trinidad and  
Tobago

OAS Colleagues, Experts Distinguished Participants

Members of the Media

I am honoured to have been asked to speak, on behalf of the OAS, at the opening  
of this Sub-Regional Seminar, organised by the Inter-American Observatory on  
Drugs (OID) of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), in  
conjunction with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, through the National  
Drug Council (NDC) and the National Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention  
Programme (NADAPP), and with funding from the Government of Canada.

CICAD serves as the Western Hemisphere's policy forum on all aspects of the drug problem. CICAD's goal is to foster multilateral cooperation on drug issues in the Americas; to execute action programmes to strengthen the capacity of OAS member states to prevent and treat licit and illicit drug abuse; to combat the production of illicit drugs; and to deny traffickers their illegal profits. In this respect, CICAD promotes drug-related research, information exchange, specialised training and technical assistance. CICAD also develops and recommends minimum standards for drug-related legislation, treatment and the measurement of both drug consumption and the cost of drugs to society, as well as drug control measures, among other things.

The OID, as a CICAD initiative, assists our member states to improve their capacity to collect and analyse drug statistics. The OID also assists member states in the implementation of drug surveys and other studies, and promotes the development and establishment of national drug observatories and the use of standardised data and methodologies.

For these reasons, we are pleased to work closely and in harmony with both the NDC and NADAPP through their respective line Ministries, the Ministry of National Security and the Ministry of Health, to support their efforts to monitor and coordinate national anti-drug strategies and initiatives in Trinidad and Tobago, which are aimed at drug abuse prevention and demand reduction.

The objective of this sub-regional seminar, with participants from The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Lucia and, of course, Trinidad and Tobago, is therefore to improve the capacity of persons working in drug

prevention across the Caribbean region to utilise research in guiding their drug policy and prevention programming.

As such, the seminar will:

1. Sensitise participants on the importance and usefulness of scientific information and research;
2. Review actual data from participating countries;
3. Identify patterns and trends in drug consumption;
4. Demonstrate the process of translating data into information and policy;
5. Discuss the prioritisation of issues in the context of scarce resources;
6. Take a step-by-step approach to policy development;
7. Introduce the theoretical underpinnings of prevention science; and
8. Highlight the importance of situation analysis and evaluation.

By the end of this seminar, we hope that you, the participants, will have a better understanding of the link between research and policy development; that you will be able to prepare a situation analysis of the drug problem in your countries based on facts and data; that you will be able to incorporate evidence into your programme design and implementation; and that you will also be better able to monitor and evaluate your prevention programmes.

Obviously, you have much to do over the next few days and I thank you all for accepting the invitation to participate in this seminar. I commend you all on the invaluable work that you already do and I wish you every success in your endeavours here and on your return to your respective posts.

On behalf of CICAD and the OAS, I wish to express our deep appreciation to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago; I would like to thank the NDC and

NADAPP, especially NDC Manager Esther Best and NADAPP Coordinator Wendy-Ann Wattie, for all that they have put in place so well to make this seminar a reality; and a sincere thank you to the Government of Canada for its generous financial support.

Thank you all for your kind attention.