



Organization of
American States | More rights
for more people

Remarks by Jeanelle van GlaanenWeygel, OAS Resident Representative in Jamaica, at the
Jamaica National Household Prevalence Survey Launch: Dissemination of preliminary findings
November 15, 2016
Terra Nova Hotel

Dr. Reid, Dr. Goldburn, Mrs. Clarke-Davis, Michael Tucker, Uki Atkinson, my colleague Pernell Clarke, ladies and gentlemen, good morning!

The Organization of American States (OAS) through the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) is always pleased to support Jamaica through the National Council on Drug Abuse (NCDA) with its research on drug use. The OAS' support of this household survey on drugs was made possible through the generous support of the Open Society Foundations, for which we are most grateful.

Jamaica joins only two other Caribbean countries that have been able to implement one of these fairly complex surveys in the last 2 years. It takes a great deal of resources to implement a study of this type, and there are a great number of moving parts to coordinate. Sensitization, statistical samples, training, interviewers, schedules, collaboration with stakeholders, respondents, equipment, the media, are just a fraction of the things that had to be coordinated in order to ensure the success of this project. Fortunately, the protocol that was developed by CICAD was used to guide this study in Jamaica, along with the skills and experience of the team involved. CICAD provided the methodology, technical support, funding, training, and overall coordination; while the in-country activities were coordinated and implemented by the NCDA in conjunction with local stakeholders. We would like to congratulate the National Council on Drug Abuse, as always, for doing an excellent job in executing these types of projects.

OAS member states approved the Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs for 2016-2020 two weeks ago at CICAD's 60th Regular Session. Through this plan, member states reiterate their commitment to continue addressing the drug problem by placing people at the center of drug policies. The plan also stresses the need for an evidence-based approach to dealing with the drug problem. Our discussion today, on the preliminary findings of the household survey on drugs are thus in line with this evidence-based approach. This study should provide the government of Jamaica with solid data on the prevalence of drug use in the country and overall perceptions from the general population about drug use and the 2015 Amendment of the Dangerous Drugs Act. This information should equip key stakeholders with the information needed to prepare a situational analysis of the drug problem in Jamaica and to incorporate this evidence into policy development, program planning and implementation.

We thank the Government of Jamaica for its continued belief in the work of the OAS/CICAD and for its fruitful partnership with us. We congratulate Jamaica on the fine work that it continues to do through the National Council on Drug Abuse and we thank you, the stakeholders, for taking the time to participate in this important event today.