



OAS | CICAD



**INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE
CONTROL COMMISSION**

CICAD

SIXTY-SEVENTH REGULAR SESSION

July 17, 2020

Virtual session 10:00 – 12:00 hrs (Washington D.C. time)

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FINAL REPORT

I. BACKGROUND

Article 21 of the Statute of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) provides that the Commission shall hold two regular sessions per year, one to address general topics and another to address specific technical topics determined by the Commission or such other matters that require its special attention. The Statute also provides that the Commission shall hold special sessions whenever it so decides or at the request of a majority of its member states.

At its sixty-sixth regular session, held in November 2019 in Miami, Florida, (CICAD/doc.2491/19 rev. 1), the Commission agreed to have one in-person high level Commissioners' regular session meeting in the fall (latter half of each calendar year; typically November) for four days, and a one-day, OAS mission-based meeting in the spring (first half of each calendar year; typically April or May) to approve CICAD's resolution language for the OAS General Assembly and approve the CICAD Annual Report for the previous calendar year.

Pursuant to Articles 20 and 21 of the Statute, and due to the current circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the sixty-seventh regular session was held virtually on July 17, 2020.

This report provides a summary of session, including document reference numbers, a list of decisions, and a summary of salient points raised by the delegations during the deliberations.

II. MINUTES

1. Opening remarks

Speakers:

a. Adam E. Namm, Executive Secretary, Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) (CICAD/doc.2527/20)

Ambassador Namm reminded delegations of the decision taken by member states at CICAD's 66th regular session last November in Miami, that CICAD spring regular sessions would be one-day, OAS mission-based, in-person meetings, to approve language for inclusion in the draft General Assembly resolution on security, and to approve the CICAD Annual Report for the previous calendar year. However, due to the disruption caused by the pandemic, the CICAD 67th session was moved to a virtual meeting in order to approve the aforementioned documents. Given the short timeframe to achieve the necessary approval of the two documents on the agenda, CICAD 67 did not allow for the customary participation of civil society organizations, international organizations, and OAS Permanent Observer countries, Ambassador Namm recommended that the topic of including Permanent Observer countries, international organizations, and civil society in future spring regular sessions be discussed at CICAD 68.

Ambassador Namm noted that, during the current pandemic, drug traffickers are taking advantage of national and global vulnerabilities and have put financial strains on resources that have been relocated to security and humanitarian tasks related to the pandemic. Over the past five months, CICAD has carried out activities to understand the effects of COVID-19 and mitigate its impact in the Hemisphere.

Among them, Ambassador Namm mentioned the paper entitled, "COVID-19 and the Treatment of Substance Use Disorders;" webinars on alcohol use during the pandemic; several virtual events on alternatives to incarceration for drug-related crimes; virtual courses at the Regional Counterdrug Intelligence School of the Americas; the paper entitled, "Considerations for Drug Research and COVID-19;" and online training for national early warning systems in the Americas. Furthermore, Ambassador Namm conveyed the ongoing work of the CICAD Executive Secretariat with CICAD Chair the United States to prepare a draft new OAS Hemispheric Drug Strategy and corresponding Plan of Action. Similarly, work is being undertaken with Canada, the Chair of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism's Inter-Governmental Working Group, to craft alternatives for the MEM eighth round.

b. Farah Urrutia, Secretary, Secretariat for Multidimensional Security (SMS)/OAS (CICAD/doc.2528/20)

Secretary Urrutia welcomed all member states and recognized the United States as CICAD Chair and Colombia as Vice-Chair. Secretary Urrutia recognized U.S. support in drafting the new OAS/CICAD Hemispheric Drug Strategy and its Plan of Action, as well as the OAS General Assembly resolution on security along with member states' significant contributions. She acknowledged Canada's coordination of the Inter-Governmental Working Group (IWG) for the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) eighth round process, and commended the leadership of Ambassador Namm in adapting quickly during the pandemic. Secretary Urrutia highlighted CICAD's series of virtual courses, webinars, published assessments and guidelines, which together with the work of the various departments of the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security have served as useful tools for member states to strategically and effectively tackle transnational organized crime.

Secretary Urrutia thanked donors' valuable contributions and reaffirmed SMS' commitment to seek coordinated responses to address threats undermining hemispheric security and face new challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. She proposed continued joint efforts with strategic partners, and strengthening synergies and coordination with other institutions, to achieve sustainable evidence-based results, in full respect of the rule of law, gender equality, and fundamental freedoms for all people. Looking forward, Secretary Urrutia sees the Hemisphere as emerging stronger from the pandemic, having identified best practices and lessons learned, as well as opportunities for improvement to strengthen the OAS.

c. Sasha Kasanof, CICAD Chair, Director, Office of Global Programs and Policy Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, U.S. Department of State (CICAD/doc.2529/20)

Mr. Kasanof expressed his appreciation for member states' online contributions to the draft OAS General Assembly resolution on security. He highlighted that transnational criminal groups are adapting quickly to shifting circumstances during the pandemic and alerted to the emergence of the new psychoactive substance opioid isotonitazine, which is already present in six European Union member countries. Moreover, he mentioned the increase of traffickers exploiting the Internet, dark web, and encrypted peer-to-peer messaging applications, to market and sell drugs worldwide. Mr. Kasanof informed that in the U.S., the pandemic has accelerated overdose deaths due to increased anxiety, isolation, and depression. Likewise, the CICAD Chair stated that the availability of adequate drugs, such as Naloxone, to reverse overdoses is challenging due to social distancing, as well as access to medication-assisted treatment, inpatient residential treatment, and in-person therapy, which increases the risk of spreading COVID-19. In this regard, U.S. frontline healthcare providers to

continue to reach out to the most vulnerable populations, and additional training on telehealth services is being provided to patients in rural communities.

Mr. Kasanof stressed that OAS member states could not let the pandemic present a safe haven for drug crimes to flourish. Fighting drug trafficking in the Hemisphere remains a priority for the U.S., and as such, Mr. Kasanof informed that the U.S. launched enhanced counter-narcotics operations with 22 partner nations on April 1, 2020, and emphasized the importance of sharing information and best practices to reduce both the supply and demand for illicit drugs. Mr. Kasanof referred to updating the OAS/CICAD Hemispheric Drug Strategy and its Plan of Action with a streamlined approach yielding higher impact and offering countries greater direction in tackling the collective challenges. He indicated that both documents would soon be shared with member states for input and feedback.

2. Adoption of the draft agenda and the draft schedule of activities

The Commission adopted the draft agenda (CICAD/doc.2524/20rev.1) and the draft schedule of activities (CICAD/doc.2525/20rev.1) without amendment.

3. Presentation of draft CICAD Annual Report 2019 (CICAD/doc.2523/20)

The CICAD Chair submitted the draft Annual Report of CICAD for 2019 (CICAD/doc.2523/20) to the Commission for approval.

Decisions

The Commission approved the draft CICAD Annual Report for 2019 (CICAD/doc.2523/20).

4. Presentation of Draft Resolution for the 50th session of the General Assembly of the OAS (CICAD/doc.2526/20)

The U.S. delegation, as CICAD Chair, submitted the draft resolution for the General Assembly (CICAD/doc.2526/20) to the Commission for approval. In light of the developing pandemic, the Chair solicited comments virtually, rather than host in-person negotiations, over the course of two comment periods, in March and May of 2020. Comments and edits were submitted by nine member states. The final draft was circulated to member states on July 7, 2020. The Chair informed delegations that following the regular session, the Chair would work with CICAD's Executive Secretariat to reflect any non-substantive changes or considerations that may be necessary for grammatical or stylistic purposes, and a revised version of the document would be shared with member states as reference. The Chair urged delegations wishing to propose new, substantive language, to do so within the framework of the Committee on Hemispheric Security, in preparation for the OAS General Assembly.

Decisions

The Commission approved the paragraphs of the draft resolution for the 50th session of the General Assembly of the OAS (CICAD/doc.2526/20).

5. Other business

Mexico: referred to the important process that took place recently to draft the paragraphs for the draft resolution for the fiftieth regular session of the OAS General Assembly, in which Mexico participated. In that context, the delegate commended the leadership of the United States as Chair of the Commission and stressed the interest of his country in continuing to support initiatives that seek answers and solutions to the world drug problem in the region, based on relevant instruments of the international drug control system and other pertinent documents.

Uruguay: mentioned the country's efforts to strengthen public policies on drugs. Such policies are based on addressing the issue in a comprehensive, balanced, and sustainable way, founded on scientific evidence, social participation, and a decentralized approach that facilitates empowerment of communities. The delegation also pledged to continue working with the CICAD Executive Secretariat on issues related to problematic substance use (such as prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and social integration), and to counteract illicit drug trafficking. Finally, the delegate committed to join efforts with other countries on these issues and to participate in CICAD's groups of experts in order to contribute to the search for and implementation of comprehensive approaches, focusing on people, human rights, public health, and gender equality.

Canada: highlighted the country's interest in continuing to support CICAD's mission and thanked the Executive Secretariat for its support of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy, commending the Inter-American Program for Strengthening Gender Equality in Counterdrug Law Enforcement Agencies (GENLEA) and initiatives related to mainstreaming gender perspective in national drug policies. In addition, the delegation referred to the importance of civil society participation in the Commission's regular sessions and, as chair of the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM), invited all countries to participate and contribute to updating the process of this important evaluation mechanism.

Trinidad and Tobago: referred to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the impossibility of holding the sixty-seventh regular session in person, and praised the work of CICAD, in particular in terms of its swift adaptation to holding virtual activities. The delegate also thanked the CICAD Executive Secretariat for the support provided to her country and the other Caribbean member states on various issues, especially in a time of great vulnerability and uncertainty. In that context, the representative of Trinidad and Tobago praised the results achieved by the MEM in its seventh evaluation round and referred to the importance of international cooperation in responding to the challenges posed by the world drug problem in the region.

Ecuador emphasized the need for balanced drug policies to allow for the strengthening of illicit drug demand and supply reduction programs, as well as the importance of research on these issues as a cross-cutting theme. The delegate mentioned his country's interest in reinforcing institutional strengthening measures and the adoption of comprehensive actions the guidelines which include the promotion of public health and full respect for human rights. Finally, the representative of Ecuador emphasized the benefits of using technology to conduct virtual activities, such as those carried out under the Health and Life in the Americas Program (SAVIA).

Guatemala: mentioned the main measures that the country was carrying out to counteract the challenges posed by the world drug problem and emphasized his delegation's commitment to join forces with the CICAD Executive Secretariat and all OAS member states to address this issue.

Likewise, the delegate expressed his interest in participating in future virtual initiatives of the Commission, as well as in sponsoring training activities in his country when circumstances allowed it. **Bolivia:** referred to the situation in the country with regard to drug trafficking and the increase in drug use. The delegate also mentioned the measures that the interim government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia was carrying out, both to improve the worrying situation regarding COVID-19, and to counteract illicit drug trafficking. Within this framework, he referred to counter-narcotics operations that culminated in major drug seizures, especially of cocaine hydrochloride and marijuana, as well as seizures of assets proceeding from drug trafficking. Finally, the delegate pledged to strengthen collaboration with CICAD and with the other countries of the region in order to achieve common objectives in the fight against drug trafficking.

Costa Rica: highlighted the importance of combating illicit drug trafficking by air, emphasizing the increasing use of light aircraft and ultralight planes to traffic illicit drugs, as well as the problem of clandestine airstrips in the region. In that context, the delegation requested that the CICAD Executive Secretariat support member states in strengthening their control measures to address this issue as well as to promote international cooperation in that area.

Peru: referred to the challenges that it had been facing during the COVID-19 pandemic, as global drug consumption has increased over the previous months, with organized crime seeking to meet existing demand through the production of cocaine hydrochloride in the country. The delegate referred to the measures being carried out within the framework of a national policy against drug trafficking that included illicit crop eradication and alternative, integral, and sustainable development. Finally, the delegation emphasized the importance of the principle of common and shared responsibility in the implementation of measures to address the world drug problem, as well as international cooperation as an effective and necessary tool.

Argentina: referred to the health crisis that Argentina is facing due to the pandemic, as well as its impact, especially with regard to the increase in the use of certain drugs and psychoactive substances. In addition, the delegation mentioned that efforts were being made in the country to identify the causes of drug use, especially among young people, as well as helping them choose "not to use." The delegate informed that Argentina was implementing new protocols for action and interagency strategies that had been devised taking into consideration people's vulnerabilities, such as socioeconomic needs. In addition, the delegate explained that such strategies adopted an inclusive approach, based on gender equality, and aimed at countering drug trafficking, as well as addressing drug use prevention and treatment programs for users.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: mentioned the importance of cooperation among countries to address the consequences of the world drug problem and thanked the CICAD Executive Secretariat for its actions in this regard. The delegate voiced support for the development of CICAD's new Hemispheric Drug Strategy and Plan of Action. and praised the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) during its seventh evaluation round, which concluded in 2019.

Jamaica: expressed interest in continuing to strengthen all thematic areas included in the Hemispheric Drug Strategy and its Plan of Action, pledging to participate in the review and update of both documents, which will be submitted for adoption at the next CICAD regular session. With regard to the main challenges faced by the country in this area, the delegate stressed that the use of postal services to distribute drugs to users is becoming more frequent and referred to the need for countries to prepare adequately to face this growing trend. In addition, the representative of Jamaica noted the country's

willingness to continue implementing actions to reduce the demand for drugs in the country and to bring criminal groups involved in drug trafficking to justice, as well as to promote cross-border cooperation and the exchange of anti-narcotics police information.

Barbados: expressed concern about how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the global drug problem, particularly in the Caribbean. Emphasizing the lack of resources to meet the current challenges in this area, the delegate thanked the CICAD Executive Secretariat for the support provided on various issues. These included drug demand reduction, development of the country's early warning system, the National Plan on Drugs, and updating of standards on control of precursor chemicals. Finally, the delegation emphasized the need for all countries to redouble their efforts to respond to current and emerging challenges, stressed its commitment in that regard, and praised the work of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM).

Saint Lucia: thanked the CICAD Executive Secretariat and Chair for organizing the meeting, despite the pandemic, and for all the programs that were helping the country to counter and respond to the challenges of the world drug problem, in the area of supply and demand reduction, as well as institutional strengthening. The delegate also expressed her appreciation for the work of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) and welcomed the hemispheric report published in the seventh round, highlighting the importance of the findings identified in that document. Finally, the delegate undertook to participate in the review and updating of the Hemispheric Drug Strategy and its Plan of Action, with a view to making those documents important points of reference for the Commission's activities.

El Salvador: emphasized the work being carried out in the country, especially in demand reduction through addiction prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programs being implemented with a multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach, involving various public institutions and nongovernmental organizations. In addition, the delegate commented that El Salvador was being used by organized crime as a drug transit country and referred to the efforts of control agencies to combat drug trafficking, including in maritime anti-drug interdiction and international cooperation. The delegate expressed his interest in continuing to collaborate with CICAD and in receiving technical assistance to respond to existing challenges.

Mexico: emphasized interest in supporting the review and update of the Hemispheric Drug Strategy and its Plan of Action and pledged to participate in the IWG/MEM for the Mechanism's eighth evaluation round. The delegate expressed Mexico's interest in presenting its candidacy for Vice Chair of the Group of Experts on Demand Reduction and highlighted changes being implemented at the national level, including an innovative mental health care program for addictions, based on a gender, intercultural, and human-rights approach.

Barbados: cited the main activities organized by CICAD in which the country recently participated, covering such topics as non-custodial alternatives for minor drug-related crimes; prevention and treatment for persons with drug use disorders, particularly adolescents; and strengthening of the drug information networks (DIN) and Early Warning Systems (EWS). The delegate also mentioned Barbados' interest in continuing to participate in the Group of Experts on Chemical Substances and Pharmaceutical Products, as well as in the CICAD Group of Experts on Maritime Narcotrafficking.

6. Topics, dates and location of the sixty-eighth regular session of CICAD

Colombia, as CICAD Vice-Chair, thanked the ES-CICAD for establishing a centralized forum in the region to discuss priority issues related to drug use. The delegate described the new Colombian drug policy “Ruta Futuro,” which he reported as being effective and productive for the well-being of the country. The delegate congratulated the work being undertaken by the U.S., as CICAD Chair, and stated that his country was prepared to hold a semi-“in-person” sixty-eighth regular session in Colombia at the end of 2020. The CICAD Vice-Chair recommended that two delegates per member state, international organization and civil society attend the meeting in person, and that the meeting be live streamed, recognizing that the proposal is subject to change depending on the COVID-19 situation. The CICAD Vice-Chair highlighted the goal to approve the Hemispheric Drug Strategy and the Plan of Action at the next CICAD meeting, and stressed the need for regional consensus with regards to addressing the new realities of the drug use problem brought about by the global pandemic.

7. Other business

The CICAD Chair offered the floor to delegations that wished to speak to previous agenda items or to raise other matters.

Mexico: Called on member states to continue protecting the health of substance users during the COVID-19 crisis. Mexico will actively participate in the formulation of the next Hemispheric Drug Strategy and Action Plan, updating the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism, and assuming the vice-chair of the Group of Experts on Demand Reduction.

Barbados: Reaffirmed support for CICAD, expressed gratitude for member state contributions to programs from which Barbados benefits, including alternatives to incarceration, demand reduction, chemical precursors control, and strengthening port security.

8. Closing remarks by CICAD Chair

United States: Thanked member states for continuing their efforts to combat the world drug problem and for approving the documents under consideration. The Chair also thanked the OAS and CICAD Executive Secretariat for adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic in planning this session, and for helping member states to continue responding to this unprecedented challenge. The CICAD Chair highlighted that the draft Hemispheric Drug Strategy and Plan of Action would be shared in the near future and welcomed input from member states. Finally, Mr. Kasanof noted that CICAD 67 would be the last session under the U.S. Chair, and looked forward to Colombia’s positive role as the next CICAD Chair.

III. DECISIONS

The Commission took the following decisions:

1. The Commission adopted the draft agenda (CICAD/doc.2524/20 rev. 1) and the draft schedule of activities (CICAD/doc.2525/20 rev. 1).
2. The Commission approved the draft CICAD 2019 Annual Report (CICAD/doc.2523/20).
3. The Commission approved CICAD's paragraphs for the omnibus resolution on Multidimensional Security for the fiftieth regular session of the OAS General Assembly (CICAD/doc.2526/20).

IV. PARTICIPANTS

1. Member states of CICAD

Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States and Uruguay.