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REPORT **PREPARATORY INTERGOVERNMENTAL WORKING GROUP** **MEETING (PRE-GTI)**

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES



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**PREPARATORY INTERGOVERNMENTAL
WORKING GROUP MEETING
OF THE MULTILATERAL EVALUATION
MECHANISM (Pre-IWG)
Buenos Aires, Argentina**

**April 29, 2008
March 25 – 28, 2008
Original: Spanish**

REPORT PREPARATORY INTERGOVERNMENTAL WORKING GROUP MEETING (PRE-IWG)

Draft Report of the Preparatory Meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group (Pre-IWG)

Buenos Aires, March 25-28, 2008

1- Background

1.1- At the forty-second regular session of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, held in Santa Marta, Colombia, November 27-30, 2007, the GEG Coordinator presented his report on the second GEG meeting of the Fourth Evaluation Round (2005-2006) of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM). Responding to concerns expressed by the government experts, he proposed that the Commission convene a pre-Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) meeting in 2008 to determine how the MEM process could be improved for the Fifth Evaluation Round. He suggested four tasks that could be addressed at that meeting: review the MEM questionnaire and its indicators; explore the procedures and methods to carry out more deliberations via the Internet; define the desired professional qualifications and expertise of GEG members; and determine the means for improving the role and preparation of the national coordinating entity (NCE) in each country.

1.2- The Commission discussed the proposal and approved the report and the scheduling of a pre-IWG meeting for 2008 in order to consolidate the MEM process and draw on the lessons learned from the latest evaluation round. Argentina offered to serve as the host country for this meeting.

1.3- Although the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) normally meets close to the start of each evaluation round, the Commission considered that the holding of a pre-meeting would make it possible to draw on the recent experience of the fourth round, facilitating the identification of problems and weaknesses to be overcome.

1.4- In this regard the preparatory meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group was convened for March 25-28, 2008, in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina. The countries were encouraged to include representatives of the Governmental Expert Group (GEG) and officials of their National Coordinating Entities (NCEs) in their delegations, so that the meeting's participants would be thoroughly familiar with the mechanism.

1.5- The purpose of the meeting, as stated in the convocation, was to identify problems and weaknesses in both the procedures and the questionnaire indicators, and to prepare for the upcoming meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group in early 2009.

2- General Aspects of the Pre-IWG Meeting

2.1- The meeting was attended by representatives of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

2.2- The Inaugural Session of the Pre-IWG Meeting on Tuesday, March 25, began with opening statements from Dr. José Ramón Granero, Executive Secretary of the Secretaría de Programación de la Drogadicción y la Lucha contra el Narcotráfico [Secretariat for Programming of Drug Addiction and the Fight against Drug Trafficking] (SEDRONAR), and Mr. Abraham Stein, representing the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security of the OAS. The meeting's chair was Dr. Mariana Souto Zabaleta of Argentina, who shared the head table with Mr. Abraham Stein; the MEM Section Coordinator of the CICAD Executive Secretariat, Ms. Angela Crowdy; and the Coordinator of the Governmental Expert Group, Mr. Alberto del Río. The List of Participants is attached in *ANNEX I*.

2.3- The meeting's approved agenda included the following topics: Perspectives on the Fourth Evaluation Round (2005-2006); Review of the MEM Evaluation Cycle and proposals for the Fifth Evaluation Round; the MEM Procedural Manual; Manual for Preparation of Reports; Questionnaire Indicators (Institutional Strengthening, Demand Reduction, Supply Reduction, Control Measures; meeting of the IWG). The approved agenda is attached in *ANNEX II*.

2.4- At the outset of their work, the participants agreed that the meeting would be primarily technical in nature and that its purpose was not to reach specific agreements on possible changes in the mechanism, but rather to pinpoint weaknesses and possible solutions to be definitively addressed by the Intergovernmental Working Group, which is the competent body to review and update the process.

3- Perspectives on the Fourth Evaluation Round (2005-2006)

3.1- Discussion of Perspectives on the Fourth Evaluation Round started with a series of presentations on the experience of the Governmental Expert Group, the National Coordinating Entities, and the MEM Section. The presentation on the GEG perspective was made by its coordinator. Presentations on the perspective of the National Coordinating Entities were made by the delegates of Trinidad and Tobago, Peru, Guatemala, and the United States. The MEM Section perspective was presented by its coordinator.

3.2- After these presentations, participants reaffirmed the importance of the mechanism and its success as a unique experience in multilateral evaluation of national and hemispheric drug control policies, with a comprehensive treatment consistent with the

Anti-Drug Strategy in the Hemisphere. The participants noted the importance of the MEM review process, and the need to shape the mechanism to produce an evaluation that goes beyond a formal evaluation of the implementation of policies—which has already been achieved—to move if possible toward assessment of the effectiveness of the policies implemented and the specific effect on the problems addressed by those policies. The participants recognized that it would not be easy to achieve this new orientation, and that it would require a great deal of strengthening of national information systems. However, the pre-IWG agreed that it is possible and necessary to work on techniques for achieving this objective in the medium term.

4- The MEM Process Cycle and proposals for the Fifth Evaluation Round

4.1- The participants analyzed the schedule of activities of the Fourth Evaluation Round (2005-2006) and a proposal for the Fifth Round prepared by the MEM Section.

4.2- The participants reaffirmed the need for the mechanism's reports to be timely as regards the specific facts and policies evaluated, but they recognized the problems inherent in data gathering, preparation and publication of the reports, and their coordination with the persons responsible for approval by the Commission. They concurred that the proposal presented was appropriate, but they agreed to allow time for possible minor adjustments.

4.3- The participants agreed that it would be suitable for the reports' covers to show the year of publication rather than the evaluation period.

5- MEM Procedural Manual

5.1- The participants exchanged ideas on the following aspects of the MEM Procedural Manual: Governmental Expert Group (nature of the experts; composition; structure; functions; operation); National Coordinating Entity (functions and responsibilities); MEM Section; and in-situ visits.

5.2- The participants decided that it would be advisable to postpone analysis of the characteristics of the Multilateral Evaluation Report and the Report on Follow-up of Implementation of Recommendations to a later stage, to address their content in the light of the various changes being made to the process and the questionnaire.

5.3- Concerning the Governmental Expert Group, there was a consensus on the need to strengthen the technical nature of this group and that it would be appropriate to ask the countries to provide experts with solid technical knowledge and experience in the central themes of the mechanism, which are institutional strengthening, demand reduction, supply reduction, and control measures. It was also agreed that it is desirable

to request the countries, if able, to designate alternate experts with similar qualifications to those expected of the principal experts.

5.4- With a view to strengthening the Expert Group there was an exchange of ideas on the need to introduce training opportunities, either in person or virtual, in order to guarantee that all experts are familiar with the various manuals used by the mechanism, the instrument used for the evaluation, and the guidelines for conducting it.

5.5- The participants also discussed the possibility of evaluating the experts' performance. On this matter, it was recalled that the Commission's forty-first regular session approved a proposal that the GEG Coordinators, with the assistance of the MEM Section, should present to each CICAD meeting a detailed report on the participation and attendance of experts, identifying the country they represent, their attendance at working group sessions, and their participation in the preparatory work prior to the meetings.

5.6- As regards the National Coordinating Entities, it was suggested that a training manual be prepared to assist these entities in drafting their responses to the questionnaire.

5.7- There was a general discussion of several questions concerning the order of topics and the responsibilities of each of the actors involved in the process, which should be changed in the current Procedural Manual.

5.8- The participants agreed that it is necessary to revise the chapter on in-situ visits, clarifying their objective and differentiating them from those carried out to promote the mechanism. Although it was recognized that the in-situ visits are exceptional visits and that they contribute indirectly to promotion of the mechanism, it was stressed that the in-situ visits need clearer guidelines in the framework of the evaluation process.

6- Manual for Preparation of Reports

6.1- The participants agreed that consideration of matters concerning the content, style, and format of the reports, as well as the guidelines for drafting recommendations and the style manual, should be deferred until there is progress in substantive revisions to the process and questionnaire.

6.2- However, and as a guideline for future work, participants agreed on the need to add a chapter on the purpose and objectives of the evaluation, to add more guidelines on the Introductory Document, to review the pre-set criteria on the use of periods and commas in numerical data, and to review the glossary.

7- Evaluation Questionnaire – General Aspects

7.1- The participants agreed that the Questionnaire must be an effective tool for evaluation of national drug control policies and not merely an instrument for gathering data, so efforts should be directed toward establishing and reframing indicators that support this evaluation task. Furthermore, the pre-IWG agreed that although the Questionnaire must be a standard tool, it is also necessary for the evaluation to be able to reflect and consider the specific reality of each country's situation.

7.2- The participants agreed that based on the experience of the Fourth Evaluation Round, the Questionnaire should drop all points on which countries were given the option of not supplying data if they had already done so through the framework of SIDUC and CICDAT. In order to guarantee the quality and timely availability of data, countries should be asked to provide the statistics even if they had already done so to other sections of the Executive Secretariat.

8- Evaluation Questionnaire – Institutional Strengthening

8.1- Concerning the “National Anti-drug Strategy” subchapter, the pre-IWG recommended that the objectives in each country's strategy be taken into account when analyzing the policies and concrete actions carried out in each specific area of the drug problem. To that end, the Questionnaire should include questions on the objectives and plans of each national strategy, which should be considered when evaluating the policies and actions in each chapter of the Questionnaire. In addition, participants addressed the need to differentiate between decentralization of authority and delegation of administrative responsibilities with regard to policy, and to continue identifying the agencies responsible for executing the various policies and actions in the National Strategy.

8.2- As regards the National Anti-drug Authority, it was agreed that it is necessary to request information on the specific functioning of the national authority, for example how does it actually accomplish coordination, how many people are working on it, and what budget is allocated for its operating expenses.

8.3- Under International Conventions participants discussed the possibility of eliminating as a question in the Questionnaire those instruments that all States have already ratified. There was also a discussion of the relevance and value of keeping the questions on bilateral agreements signed by the States, and if they are retained, providing more information on their content.

8.4- Concerning the indicator on National Information Systems, it was agreed to include studies on supply reduction and perhaps eliminate the Cost Table, keeping only one question to indicate whether the countries are undertaking this type of study. In addition,

participants considered the possibility of adding questions to indicate whether the Drug Observatories are fully operational.

8.5- Finally, as regards the indicator on “Information Distribution Capacity,” it was proposed to eliminate a large part of the current content and retain only the information deemed necessary.

9- Evaluation Questionnaire – Demand Reduction

9.1- The participants agreed that the Demand Reduction Expert Group should participate in a complete review of the indicators in this section. Likewise, they agreed on the need to revise the definitions of the key concepts in the indicators.

9.2- In the Prevention subchapter, participants agreed on the need to clearly distinguish between programs and isolated actions, as well as to reaffirm the importance of information on program coverage in order to permit a more realistic evaluation. In addition, it was suggested to ask whether the prevention programs are consistent with the Hemispheric Guidelines on the subject. As for programs, the pre-IWG recommended the inclusion of questions on each program’s objectives and duration. Concerning training, the participants agreed that Indicator 7 must be completely recast to establish priorities in terms of what is to be evaluated. Finally, the pre-IWG recommended the improvement of questions on the evaluation of results of programs executed.

9.3- The pre-IWG found the Treatment indicators confusing and in need of a thorough redraft by experts in the subject. Participants agreed that it is essential to have information on the offer of and demand for these services in each country.

9.4- As for the subchapter on Drug Use Statistics, it was suggested to eliminate the indicator on New Drugs and New Routes of Administration, asking countries to provide this information as part of the Introductory Document. There was agreement on the need to review the classification and definition of certain substances in the tables. Likewise, participants suggested the need to check the information requested in this subchapter with that requested in the chapters on supply reduction for compatibility. It was agreed to study whether to keep the Drug-related Mortality indicator and the need for an in-depth review of the indicator on Drug Use and Related Accidents and Crimes.

10- Evaluation Questionnaire – Supply Reduction

10.1- The participants recognized the need for an in-depth review of all indicators in the supply reduction area, calling on specialists and various expert groups to assist in redrafting them.

10.2- In the subchapter on Drug Production, participants agreed on the need to ask the country for a brief description of the system used for detection and quantification of crops. In addition, they found that the current formulas for potential production are incorrect and should be modified. They also called for a review of the indicator on Number of Indoor-Grown Marijuana Plants Seized. They also considered it advisable to redraft Indicator 22, and request more information on crop eradication programs. Regarding the indicators on Illicit Laboratories, participants agreed that it is impossible to quantify the potential production capacity and information should be requested on the type of laboratory and its specific role in the drug production process. Finally, participants agreed that it is once again necessary to make changes in the nomenclature and definition of substances listed.

10.3- The participants concurred that assistance is needed from specialists and the Alternative Development Expert Group for redrafting Indicators 25 and 26. They agreed that the current questions are inapplicable for most countries in the hemisphere.

10.4- Concerning Pharmaceutical Products and Chemical Substances, the participants agreed that assistance is needed from specialists and the expert groups for revision of the questions. However, the following preliminary suggestions were made: distinguish between seizures of controlled and non-controlled products in the table; redesign the tables to classify the substances by solids, liquids, and in solution; in the tables on pharmaceutical products, separate medications with special control, pharmaceutical inputs, and finished products; change the concept of disposal of substances to final disposition of substances; clarify the concepts of seizure, forfeiture, and confiscation; focus indicators 33 and 34 more on problems encountered than on the number of pre-export notifications sent and received and their responses.

11- Evaluation Questionnaire –Control Measures

11.1- In the subchapter on Illicit Drug Trafficking, the participants reaffirmed that it would be desirable to re-word all the current indicators. They agreed on the need to request more pertinent and broader data in order to shed clearer light on this core aspect of the drug problem. They called for attention to the special problem faced by transit countries. Regarding information on seizures, they agreed that it would be advisable to inquire whether the statistics are compiled by legal authorities and/or with expert support. They also agreed that the terms used in the table of Indicator 36 should be redrafted, including the unit of measure, and they considered the possibility of eliminating the request for Number of Seizures. Concerning indicators 37, 38, 40, and 41, they agreed on the need to work to find data that would facilitate understanding of the problem, not merely quantitative data based on annual statistics. They also agreed that it is necessary to revise the indicators on Exchange of Information and Specialized Training. The participants agreed that it would be highly advisable to include information on the indicators of perception of drug supply in the general and school-age population. Finally, they suggested adding an indicator on maritime drug trafficking, without ignoring the other trafficking modes, and that assistance of the Expert Group be sought on this subject.

11.2- The pre-IWG representatives agreed that the indicators in this subchapter are very inadequate as currently presented, indicating that although the indicators on Illicit Trafficking in Firearms should be maintained because of the link between this criminal activity in the Hemispheric Anti-drug Strategy, it is necessary to recast them to permit an evaluation of the problem that clearly shows its connection to the drug problem.

11.3- Regarding Money Laundering, the participants agreed that the changes made in the last Intergovernmental Working Group were inappropriate. They therefore agreed that it is necessary to develop a small number of targeted indicators on the central issues of the currently applicable international recommendations. The Executive Secretary of GAFISUD offered full cooperation in this task and participants agreed that other regional specialized groups should also be enlisted. Similarly, they agreed that it would be desirable to continue using these groups' reports as a reference framework for evaluation of this topic.

12- Work Plan for 2008-2009

12.1- As reflected in this report, the initial objective for the preparatory meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group (pre-IWG), was the identification of weaknesses and areas of the evaluation process and the questionnaire indicators that need to be improved for the Fifth Round. Each chapter of this report describes various deficiencies and presents preliminary suggestions for the redrafting of, modification of, and/or additions to the indicators, as well as ideas on how to improve the procedural manual and the schedule for the Fifth Evaluation Round..

12.2- The participants agreed that this meeting is the beginning of a period of work to provide solid technical input for the forthcoming meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG), which will take place in February 2009. It was decided that work should be continued electronically, inviting participation of those countries that did not take part in the Buenos Aires meeting.

12.3- To this end, the participants agreed to set-up a "Pre-IWG online" site coordinated by the MEM Section and the Chair, in order to maintain a permanent exchange of ideas until the IWG meeting.

12.4- The work plan initially approved includes the distribution of this draft report, the reception and consolidation of comments, the preparation of the final report of the pre-IWG, and consultations regarding indicators with specialists, the various sections of the CICAD Executive Secretariat, and the various Expert Groups. All inputs received in the course of this working year, and any new suggestions that may arise, will be forwarded to the pre-IWG participants, distributed to all member states, and presented to the IWG in February 2009 for its consideration. Finally, the IWG will prepare, as in previous rounds, recommendation proposals for the Fifth Round, which will be submitted for approval to CICAD's forty-fifth regular session.

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Secretaría de Programación para
la Prevención de la Drogadicción
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PRESIDENCIA DE LA NACIÓN

29 abril 2008

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