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Washington, D.C. 20006
United States of America

**INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE
CONTROL COMMISSION**

CICAD

Organization of American States

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www.oas.org

Secretariat for Multidimensional Security

**FORTY-SIXTH REGULAR SESSION
November 18 - 20, 2009
Miami, Florida**

**OEA/Ser.L/XIV.2.46
CICAD/doc.1767/09
19 November 2009
Original: Spanish**

**REMARKS BY MS. MARIA TERESA CHADWICK
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF CONACE**

**DISCOURSE BY CICAD/OAS PRESIDENT AND
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF CONACE (CHILE), MS.
MARIA TERESA CHADWICK**

**46° ORDINARY PERIOD OF SESSIONS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN
DRUG CONTROL COMMISSION, ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN
STATES (CICAD/OAS)**

MIAMI, UNITED STATES
18 - 20 NOVEMBER 2009

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OAS Multidimensional Security Secretariat

Ambassador James Mack
Executive Secretary

Inter-American Drug Control Commission CICAD/OAS

Messrs. Ambassadors,

Messieurs and Mesdames Delegates,

Friends,

Upon taking office of the Presidency of CICAD/OAS last November, I manifested that this responsibility was assumed sealed by and “**active commitment**” based on the strong conviction that by working together within hemispheric-wide policies, the countries of the Americas can grant better living conditions for their citizens and foster their integral human development. It is particularly in this important forum CICAD/OAS where we assume the complex problem of supply and consumption of illegal drugs in a responsible, systematic, joint and collaborative fashion.

I also stated that in terms of cooperation, our Hemisphere has shown an important progress in recent years: this is evidenced in the debate of problems and policies, the creation of mechanisms, and multilateral endeavors and the promotion on horizontal cooperation, which has eventually reinforced our hemispheric status. Despite this, we are still **an important part of the world’s drug problem**. This is still a challenge for the countries of the whole continent as well as all subsequent impacts such as violence, crime, political instability, corruption, social and family disintegration, human sorrow and poverty. Clear and appropriate policies are needed, which in turn, means more cooperation and integration.

We then had a brief analysis done on the challenges we had to face as member countries of CICAD/OAS, which I think pertinent now to review, upon leaving the Presidency:

- Firstly, we highlighted the need for an **adequate adaptation capability and give agile and innovative answers** to a phenomenon which is under constant mutation;
- We underlined that **policy assessment as well as their impact should be a permanent practice** in order to take new directions and adjust them to the ongoing conditions in a way that scientific decisions are made;

- We underscored the validity and need of our Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism as an individual and collective follow-up instrument, but we also state today that MEM is to be adjusted and updated according to the new challenges ahead;

We also introduced some **new issues relative to drugs** as we visualize them in our country:

- we advocate the use of **new technologies applicable to the problem area of drugs**;
- we stated that **the relationship between drugs and crimes** is a security problem issue challenging countries on a permanent basis;
- from the **methodological** point of view, we insist on the challenge of improving intervention programs on prevention, treatment and social reincorporation based on a scientifically rigorous protocol coupled with impact evaluations;
- we insist that in the area of treatment and rehabilitation, the big challenges are, on the one hand, a **substantial quality improvement** in the services rendered to people in each of our countries, and the **search and implementation of adequate answers to specific needs** based on tailor-made programs and selective interventions.

In short, our purpose is to diversify our proposal viz à viz the phenomenon of consumption and drug trafficking under constant mutation; to learn how to read the new trends and update our institutional, legal, program and management proposals.

CICAD/OAS based on the Executive Secretariat, different expert groups and the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism MEM has been restlessly working all along the year in these and other topics in search of a more efficient response to the phenomenon we are facing. Nevertheless, no doubt in the international arena, particularly in the United Nations, this has been a special year of evaluation and search of agreements and consensus to facilitate the multilateral actions for the decade to come.

Thus, one of the highest responsibilities we have assumed along the period in which Chile held the Presidency of CICAD/OAS was the representation of our hemispheric forum in the 52nd session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held in Vienna, in March this year.

I was honored to submit the report of the Americas to the Assembly, accounting for our progresses as well as our limitations and difficulties, as a response of the goals and objectives expressed in the Political Declaration of the UNGASS, 1998. The basic source of the Hemispheric Report was the information obtained along the four rounds of evaluation of the MEM, which is itself a practical evaluation mechanism structured upon periodic reports from the 34 OAS member countries, culminating with the publications of country and hemispheric reports.

Thus, and according to the information available, we had to recognize that the policies and actions implemented show a level of progress in the key aspects that were observed and followed-up. Notwithstanding, and despite progress is identified, it is not still possible to determined concrete results in terms of an improvement of the problems considering all different dimensions.

In the hemispheric report, reference is made to the still existing structural weak points affecting the hemispheric strategy against drugs.

I here quote the sincere words expressed by the Secretary General of OAS Mr. José Manuel Insulza, in the 45th period of CICAD session held in Washington, after Vienna, about our situation in the Hemisphere: "the real situation is that many of our countries are still lacking the basic institutional arrangements guaranteeing efficiency in the aim of reducing both drug consumption and trafficking and the related crimes, that is, a national counter-drug policy with an adequate budget and a central body enabled to coordinate all institutions responsible in the development of such strategy".

- Evaluation has shown that most countries are still delayed in developing and articulating harmoniously those elements. These limitations become more evident when contrasted with the high human, economical and social cost the drug phenomenon is still imposing on our society.
- All this must be considered when debating the effectiveness of strategies facing the drug problem. We should wonder whether it is possible to wait for result provided that drug strategies in most countries have not come yet to full development. Integrity and balance, two basic factors that are to model any strategy in this area, have not been assumed –beyond words - in the planning and execution of their interventions (end of quote by the Secretary General).

The conference in Vienna was a sterling moment, in which the countries gathered to evaluate progresses and delays in terms of this important global

phenomenon in which both its magnitude and complexity lead us to different conceptualizations which in turn is expressed in different public policies. We should remember that our Continent discussed the success or failure of the hemispheric drug policies, and the same holds true at an international level.

As an analysis, in Vienna, the conference assumed the position of carefully avoiding two extreme standpoints, namely, criminalization of drug use locating the phenomenon in the field of “a war against drugs”, ignoring health as part of the problem and in some occasions violating the rights of people in the name of control and prosecution.

A wide agreement was reached in recognizing that addiction must be considered and treated as an illness just as any other illnesses, and efforts should be made to detect, treat, rehabilitate and socially reincorporate those who become drug dependent. A firm recommendation was also identified in order to depenalize demand, and even use the system of legal prosecution in a perspective based on treatment and rehabilitation, particularly in cases in which traffic is marginal where demand and supply can not be distinguished.

In the other extreme we find those who want to legalize the use of drugs, under the assumption that drug control policies have been more harmful than the drug itself. In this regard, José María Costa, UNODC Executive Director, in his presentation before the Conference, stated: “drugs are not harmful because they are under control, but they are under control because they are harmful”. Nobody doubts that some control policy consequences have been particularly harsh, but no known country in the Conference favoured depenalization in any of the titles, be it a specific drug, such as marihuana, or traffic considering any dimension or characteristic.

The Conference clearly recommended a balanced strategy: cultivation should be eradicated, but within the framework of a productive alternative to allow poverty reduction for the producers; trafficking must be tackled, but by offering rehabilitation and reincorporation opportunities, particularly for the small traffickers who have become so as a need to satisfy their own addiction; prohibition must be kept and education in abstinence encouraged, although addiction must be the subject of careful, timely and efficient health attention.

Personally I consider that it will never be redundant to recall that in the Final Declaration of UNGSS countries agreed that drug fighting would be carried out “pursuant to all principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter, International Law, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”. This point has been pinpointed by some civil society organizations as one of the

progresses achieved by the Declaration by stipulating that respect to human rights should always be included in the fight against drug-trafficking. After Vienna, as I already mentioned, in May this year, the Secretary General of the OAS in his discourse in Washington D.C. posed a very important challenge on us.

No doubt, he said, that along these 13 years, the progress has been considerable. We have an important political body, CICAD; a Hemispheric Strategy, and an Evaluation Mechanism, MEM. Nevertheless, we have to admit that along this same period, the World has changed and our enemies, the criminal organizations devoted to illegal drugs production and traffic, have also done so.

Which are those changes? in his own words:

- Firstly, the **growing influence of drug cartels in the political power** and the threat they represent for security and development;
- The readjustment of drug-trafficking organizations **to work as local networks**, giving rise to a significant increase of micro-trafficking and a series of related crimes;
- The higher consumption of a wider variety of **narcotic drugs** or psychoactive products, mainly among young people which is favoured, on the other hand, by the emergence of new information technologies;
- The development of new substances of illegal consumption, creating new problems and **weakening the previous clear separation between “producer” and “consumer” countries.**

The Secretary General also stated that the time has come to review our instruments and update them as of the conditions imposed on us by the drug phenomenon. The moment has come to revise our progress, and the old and new problems we have not yet been able to overcome. It is time to decide whether we need to re-define our strategy and adjust our Action Plan to meet the new conditions. A further stage of hemispheric commitment is to be reached allowing progress in a more homogeneous way as of the deployment of counter-drug policies in the Region.

This deep and responsible review must consider – in accordance to the challenges posed by José Manuel Insulza – a solid technical and scientific

basis supporting and substantiating a renewed political commitment from the countries of the Hemisphere to the objectives of the Strategy and the new Action Plan.

Likewise, CICAD member countries in the 45TH Period of Sessions, (Washington, May, 2009) agreed to review and update the current Hemispheric Strategy which dates back to 1996. Brazil was appointed as a coordinator of the process which is divided in three different stages. Firstly, 16 member countries sent to Brazil their proposals to readjust the current counter-drug strategies and the corresponding action plans; the second stage meant to Brazil to consider all these contributions to articulate a general draft of the new strategy and the potential action plan, which was sent through e-mail to all CICAD member states; Thirdly, a meeting was held in Sao Paulo, last September, to agree the proposal to be submitted to discussion and eventual approval during the current period of session which we open today.

We should not forget that along with the current Hemispheric Strategy and the corresponding Action Plan, it was also agreed that the Political Declaration and Action Plan agreed upon in Vienna and the Discourse by the OAS Secretary General were also documents to include. We have paid particular attention to this debate and in the days to come, our efforts will be devoted to carefully review the proposal.

My dear delegates from all countries of the Americas, Technical Secretariat of CICAD, countries and organizations of the civil society participating as observers; Chile is proud and at the same time grateful for the honour of having presided this Commission along this period of time, in which the World and the Hemisphere have been evaluating their drug policies, revising the actions taken and designing strategies that will allow us to address the problem more efficiently and with less human cost.

Personally, I thank all of you who have offered their cooperation to Chile, to CONACE and to me in the exercise of this presidency. Without your support, this could have never been possible. To the United States of America, the country assuming the presidency for this period of sessions, be my words of success for such a high responsibility, as well as to Surinam who is the candidate for the Vice-Presidency.

I would like to reiterate that all efforts, despite the logical differences among the countries and their approaches, pursue a final goal that unites us all and which is of paramount importance for the human development of our peoples and the reinforcement of democracy. That goal is reducing

consumption and drug availability and the negative consequences related to these phenomena throughout the length and breath of the Hemisphere.

We know that each country, in accordance to the international character of this phenomenon, cannot have significant achievements if their individual work is not addressed hand in hand with that of our neighbours. Therefore, here and now that we are to discuss the renewal of our drug strategy in the Americas, it is most appropriate to reiterate the old expression that reads “**there is strength in numbers**”. With a coherent strategy in this area, we will achieve high quality public health, peace, social cohesion and a better democracy.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH