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FINAL REPORT
OF THE CICAD GROUP OF EXPERTS
ON ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

**MEETING OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS
ON ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT
February 12-13, 1998
Washington, D.C.**

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FINAL REPORT

I. BACKGROUND

At its twentieth regular session in Buenos Aires, Argentina (October 15-18, 1996), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) adopted the Anti-Drug Strategy in the Hemisphere. In so doing, the member states recognized 'that alternative development is an important component for generating lawful, viable, and sustainable economic options to illicit drug cultivation.'

At the twenty-first regular session of CICAD, held in Washington, D.C., on April 8-11, 1997, the Commission adopted a Plan of Action for the implementation of the Anti-Drug Strategy in the Hemisphere. In that Plan of Action, the Executive Secretariat was instructed to reconvene its Working Group on Alternative Development to consider how member states might work together and move forward to respond to illicit cultivation of plants used for the production of drugs in the hemisphere. In September 1997, the Working Group met in Washington, D.C. and identified sixteen recommendations in its final report (CICAD/DES/ALT/doc.13/97 rev.1) for consideration by the Commission at its twenty-second regular session in Lima, Peru (November 1997).

The Commission considered the final report from the September meeting and approved the Working Group's recommendations. The Executive Secretariat was directed to establish a Group of Experts on Alternative Development, to be convened in the first quarter of 1998, prior to the meeting of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

II. OPENING SESSION, WORKING SESSIONS, AND CLOSING SESSION

The opening session of the meeting was held in the morning of February 12, 1998, in the sixth-floor conference room of the General Secretariat Building of the Organization of American States. Dr. Alicia Quijano, of Colombia, Chair of the CICAD Group of Experts, welcomed the delegates and reviewed the meeting's objectives. Mr. Alberto Hart, Assistant Executive Secretary of CICAD, provided an overview of the topic, as well as an introduction to CICAD's alternative development activities.

During the meeting, working sessions were held in keeping with the agenda attached to this final report. During the first working session, the Executive Secretariat presented a report on the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the CICAD Working Group. In this context, the Secretariat reported that the following recommendations had been implemented:

The signing of a Letter of Understanding with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). This will allow the IICA to fully participate in the meetings of the Group of Experts and to provide technical support for CICAD's alternative development activities.

The completion and distribution of a detailed directory of individuals and institutions working in the field of alternative development. The directory has also been placed on CICAD's web page and will be updated periodically.

With respect to the Letter of Understanding (LOU) signed by CICAD and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the delegation of Chile requested clarification on the scope of the LOU. This was in reference to the Terms contained in the LOU which defines the activities as being applicable only to Andean countries. The Executive Secretariat explained that negotiations with IICA are based on a regional approach and that the activities included in the LOU will be implemented in other parts of the hemisphere. This approach was confirmed by the delegate of IICA.

The Group of Experts considered agenda items 4 (Informal exchange of views on the UN working draft on Eradication and Alternative Development) and 5 (Assistance with the implementation of Article 14 of the 1988 UN Vienna Convention) and, following a brief discussion, postponed consideration of both issues to the second day of the meeting.

TRAINING:

Agenda item 6 concerned Working Group recommendation no. 7 on training in the area of alternative development. The recommendation called upon the Executive Secretariat to assist member states with training activities.

The members of the Group of Experts agreed on the importance of training as a vital component for successful alternative development programming. At the same time, it was noted that training in this area covers a broad range of subjects and should not be limited to agricultural issues. The Group of Experts requested the Secretariat, in conjunction with IICA, to prepare a strategic framework document on alternative development training. The Executive Secretariat was likewise asked to seek input from member states regarding their training needs. The delegation of Peru added that countries should identify the institutions conducting training in these areas and share their experience. The delegate of Jamaica agreed that there was a wealth of experience among member states regarding alternative development activities, which should be shared. He indicated Jamaica's willingness to share its technical expertise in relation to hillside agriculture. The delegation of the United States suggested that all aspects of alternative development, including training, should be incorporated into national drug control strategies or plans.

The delegate of Grenada agreed that training in areas where illicit cultivation is taking place is important. At the same time, he emphasized the importance of prevention programs aimed at areas or countries where there is the potential for similar cultivation to begin.

The delegate of Chile suggested that the Executive Secretariat of CICAD might contact other sections or agencies of the General Secretariat in order to receive pertinent suggestions and input of experiences in this field. This information would be relevant for the formulation of training, education and public information programs and projects on alternative development.

PRIVATE INVESTMENT:

The Secretariat introduced agenda item 7, which is related to recommendation no. 9 from the Working Group. This recommendation calls upon the Group to formulate guidelines and mechanisms to increase private investment for alternative development programs.

The delegation of Mexico asked participants to share their experiences with private sector involvement in alternative development. In doing so, the delegations of Colombia, Guatemala, and Peru highlighted the importance of governments creating conditions that encourage private sector investment. At the same time, Guatemala noted that private sector enterprises sometimes become involved in drug trafficking themselves. The United States called on the Executive Secretariat to compile and disseminate information on positive experiences and guidelines on how to encourage private sector investment. Some suggestions included coordination with Chambers of Commerce in Europe and the United States, the establishment of market links for products, bilateral assistance, tariff and trade arrangements, certificates of origin, and tax incentives.

PREPARATORY SESSION FOR THE UN SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (June 1998):

The Chair introduced item 4 of the agenda, an informal exchange of views based on the provisional working document dated December 5, 1997 from the UN preparatory sessions entitled "International Cooperation on Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and the Promotion of Alternative Development Programmes and Projects". (CICAD/DES/ALT/doc. 5/98)

The discussion enabled delegations to clarify their understanding of the document and to pinpoint some areas that need further clarification in the upcoming preparatory meeting in Vienna, March 16-20, 1998, such as format and definitions.

The Group of Experts emphasized the importance of alternative development as a fundamental component of hemispheric and international illicit drug control policy. The Group also noted that the documents that were submitted for consideration by the Preparatory committee of the Special Sessions of the United Nations General Assembly constitute an excellent working base for that body to approve a document on the subject.

The countries in this Group of Experts expressed their willingness to participate actively in the negotiations on the subject, thus contributing to the full development of the preparatory process represented by the meeting that will take place in Vienna in March of 1998.

The group welcomed the cooperation to date among the members of CICAD and look forward to further collaboration in the upcoming meeting.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 14 OF THE 1988 VIENNA CONVENTION AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFIC IN NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES

The Secretariat presented agenda item 5 on Working Group recommendation no. 9. This recommendation calls upon the Executive Secretariat to assist member states in implementing Article 14 of the 1988 Vienna Convention. The Executive Secretariat sought guidance from the Group of Experts on how best to proceed with this recommendation. After some discussion, it was agreed that this issue would be addressed following consideration of the issue of eradication and alternative development during the UN Special Session of the General Assembly.

III. SITE AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place in Washington D.C., during the third quarter of the year, prior to the twenty-fourth regular session of the Commission.

The closing session took place on February 13, 1998. After the Assistant Executive Secretary of CICAD and the Chair made some closing remarks, the meeting was adjourned.

IV. OFFICERS, PARTICIPANTS, AND OBSERVERS

The member states represented at the Meeting of the Group of Experts were Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, the United States, and Uruguay. Also attending the meeting as a full member was the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

The officers of the meeting were Colombia and Bolivia as Chair and Vice Chair of the Group. The Executive Secretariat of CICAD was asked to serve as Rapporteur.

The list of participants is attached to this final report as Annex I.

V. DOCUMENTATION

The documents referred to in the course of this meeting are listed in document CICAD/DES/ALT/doc.1/98, attached to this final report as Annex II.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Group of Experts presented the following conclusions:

- Alternative development should be understood as integral development in those areas where illicit cultivation exists, as well as in regions where extreme poverty promotes migration to those affected by illicit crops;

In any drug control strategy, a balanced approach is an important element; one that includes interdiction, eradication and demand reduction programs;

- Training is a vital component of successful alternative development programming and should not be limited to agricultural issues;
- All aspects of alternative development, including training, should be included in national drug control strategies or plans;
- It is important that governments create conditions that encourage private sector investment; and
- While other regional groups have formulated a common position on eradication and alternative development, this has not been the case with the countries in the Western Hemisphere. Efforts to do so should, therefore, be promoted.

The Group of Experts agreed to recommend that, with the assistance of the Executive Secretariat, the following actions be taken, with a view to contributing to the efforts made by member states in alternative development and preparing information for consideration at its next meeting:

- The member states will identify their training requirements concerning alternative development and submit them to the Executive Secretariat for compilation and consolidation. With this information, the Executive Secretariat will then seek out possible training opportunities.
- That the Executive Secretariat, in conjunction with IICA, prepare a strategic framework document on alternative development training for consideration at the next meeting of the Group of Experts on Alternative Development.
- Through the Executive Secretariat, the Group of Experts will request the member states to forward, for subsequent compilation and dissemination, information concerning program or project evaluations on their experiences in eradication and alternative development activities. Such data will be reviewed by the Group of Experts at its next meeting to identify successful practices in alternative development programs, including private sector involvement.
- The Group of Experts will update and broaden the definition of alternative development in order to reflect all aspects of this issue, taking into account each member state's individual circumstances.