



CICAD Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission

Hemispheric Drug Strategy



Organization of
American States

Secretariat for Multidimensional Security

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Hemispheric Drug Strategy

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INTRODUCTION

The world drug problem¹, including its political, economic, social and environmental costs, constitutes a complex, dynamic and multi-causal phenomenon that presents a challenge to States and their governments. Far from being a local or regional issue, this problem demands a comprehensive, balanced and multidisciplinary approach that requires common and shared responsibility among all States.

Likewise, the world drug problem constitutes a global challenge that negatively impacts on the public health, security and well-being of all humanity. It also undermines the bases of sustainable development, the judicial systems, political and economic stability and democratic institutions, representing a threat to security, democracy, good governance and the rule of law.

Member states thus recognize the importance of efforts made to address the world drug problem; acknowledge at the same time the need to strengthen and improve strategies and actions related to this subject, and, taking into consideration the findings of the various reports of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the process of review of the goals set by the United Nations General Assembly Special Session, adopt the present Strategy, which is based on, and will be applied according to, the following principles:

¹ *The world drug problem* is defined in the **Political Declaration** of the twentieth special session of the United Nations General Assembly (1998) and in the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs **Political Declaration on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem** (2009), and includes the illicit cultivation, production, manufacture, sale, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances, including amphetamine-type stimulants, the diversion of precursors and related criminal activities.

1. Full compliance with international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, observing the principles of sovereignty and the territorial integrity of States, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, fundamental liberties, inherent human dignity, and equal rights and mutual respect among States.
2. In addressing the world drug problem, its impact on poverty and exclusion must be given special emphasis while encouraging the implementation of policies and actions that foster social inclusion and a reduction in those vulnerabilities.
3. Policies, measures and interventions to address the world drug problem should take gender issues into account.
4. Member states are responsible for providing the resources required for effective implementation of their national drug policies, and for maintaining an appropriate balance between demand reduction and supply reduction activities in accordance with the characteristics of the problem in each State.
5. The principle of common and shared responsibility is fundamental to strengthening hemispheric and regional cooperation in all its forms. Cooperation should be based on collective and coordinated efforts to address the world drug problem, with the goal of continual improvement of member states' policies on drugs.
6. The participation of civil society is of great importance, as it may offer experience and knowledge, as appropriate, in the development and implementation of drug policies and programs to address the world drug problem. In this regard, member states should encourage a broad and open debate so that all sectors of society may become aware of the diverse aspects of the phenomenon and thus contribute to strengthening national drug strategies.
7. CICAD is the competent regional forum to follow up on the implementation of this Strategy. Its Executive Secretariat will execute programs and actions in support of this Strategy as requested by the Commission, in coordination, if necessary, with other specialized organizations.
8. The MEM is the appropriate mechanism to monitor, evaluate and improve national and hemispheric policies and actions to address the world drug problem. Member states will actively participate in this Mechanism in order to keep it up to date by reviewing it periodically.

In consideration of the foregoing, the present Strategy covers the following areas:

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

With regard to the institutional strengthening needed to address the world drug problem, member states will use the following guidelines:

9. They shall establish and/or strengthen national drug authorities, placing them at a high political level, with the mission to coordinate the effective planning and implementation of national drug policies.
10. They shall design and implement a national drug policy, subject to periodic update, covering all aspects of the problem, assign responsibilities among the institutions involved, and define programs and lines of action with the goal of addressing the

problem in a comprehensive manner, including, where appropriate, the decentralization of public policies on drugs.

11. They shall develop and implement national drug policies that are evidence-based. Such evidence, whenever possible, should allow for the comparison of data among countries.
12. They shall establish and/or strengthen national observatories on drugs, or similar technical offices, to develop national drug information systems and promote scientific research to generate, collect, organize, analyze and disseminate information for the purpose of contributing to decision-making and to implementing evidence-based drug policies and strategies that reflect the situation in each country.
13. They shall promote periodic, independent evaluations of their policies, programs and interventions in the areas of demand and supply reduction. The results of these evaluations should serve as a guide for the allocation of resources and for the execution of sustainable activities.

DEMAND REDUCTION

Member states will pursue demand reduction activities under the following guidelines:

14. Demand reduction is a priority component in guaranteeing a comprehensive, balanced approach to the world drug problem, given that the abuse of drugs is a social and health problem that requires a multisectoral and multidisciplinary approach.
15. Demand reduction policies should include as essential elements universal, selective and indicated prevention, early intervention, treatment, rehabilitation and related recovery support services, with the goal of promoting the health and social well-being of individuals, families and communities, and reducing the adverse consequences of drug abuse.
16. Demand reduction policies should be supplemented by methods to disseminate information on the risks associated with drug use, through the use of new information technologies and through the mass media, to inform the general public and the various target populations about available prevention and treatment services.
17. Demand reduction requires, in accordance with the situation and magnitude of the drug problem in each country, the implementation of a variety of evidence-based prevention programs, aimed at distinct target populations, which together constitute a comprehensive system. From a methodological and design standpoint, these programs should be systematic, with specific measurable objectives.
18. It is necessary to invest in and provide a response to the specific needs of at-risk groups, including children, adolescents and youth, both within and outside the educational system and in other contexts, territories and communities. These higher vulnerability groups should be provided with education and skills development opportunities that promote a healthy lifestyle.
19. Prevention efforts should also be aimed at the adult population through family, community and workplace prevention programs, including those that address emerging issues such as driving under the influence of drugs and drug-related accidents in the workplace.
20. Drug dependence is a chronic, relapsing disease that is caused by many factors,

including biological, psychological or social, which must be addressed and treated as a public health matter, consistent with the treatment of other chronic diseases.

21. Access to treatment systems that offer a range of comprehensive therapeutic intervention models that are evidence-based and follow internationally-recognized quality standards should be facilitated. Treatment models should consider the needs of different populations, taking into account factors such as gender, age, culture and vulnerability.
22. It is necessary to explore the means of offering treatment, rehabilitation and recovery support services to drug-dependent criminal offenders as an alternative to criminal prosecution or imprisonment.
23. Recognizing that recovery from substance abuse and dependence is essential to the successful transition between incarceration and release, re-entry and social reintegration, treatment services should be made available as far as possible to offenders in corrections facilities.
24. Governments' relationships with academic and research institutions as well as specialized non-governmental organizations should be strengthened in order to foster scientific research and studies that will generate evidence on the various aspects of the demand for drugs, in order to contribute to the formulation of public policies and increased knowledge on the subject.
25. Continuing education and training for professionals, technicians and others involved in implementing drug demand reduction activities should be promoted and strengthened.
26. Drug demand reduction programs should be subject to ongoing monitoring and scientific evaluation.

SUPPLY REDUCTION

To reduce the illicit supply of drugs, member states will use the following guidelines:

27. The illicit supply of drugs continues to be a serious problem for the hemisphere and requires the adoption and improvement of comprehensive, balanced measures aimed at reducing the availability of these substances.
28. To address the illicit supply of drugs, it is essential to adopt and/or improve the mechanisms needed to gather and analyze information in order to prepare assessments that will facilitate the development of public policies in this field.
29. National programs to reduce the supply of illicit plant-based drugs should include the adoption of comprehensive measures, such as integral sustainable alternative development and law enforcement measures, in accordance with the situation in each country.
30. Given their importance to the reduction of illicit cultivation, integral sustainable alternative development programs that create conditions that contribute to addressing the world drug problem should be promoted, when appropriate.
31. It is necessary to conduct studies and research that contribute to the early identification and monitoring of new and emerging trends that could provide updated information on the illicit supply of drugs.

32. Actions to reduce negative consequences to the environment caused by the world drug problem should be promoted in accordance with the national policies of member states.

CONTROL MEASURES

In applying control measures, member states will use the following guidelines:

33. Supply reduction programs should focus on preventing the illicit manufacture of both synthetic and plant-based drugs, including the adoption of appropriate domestic controls over precursors, measures to control the international trade in precursor chemicals, consistent with the framework established in the United Nations Drug Conventions, and law enforcement measures aimed at preventing the manufacture and trafficking of such substances.
34. Legal and institutional frameworks for the effective monitoring of essential precursors and chemical substances should be strengthened in order to prevent diversion of these substances to illicit activities. Bearing in mind the use of new chemical substances for illicit drug manufacturing, member states should periodically update their lists of controlled chemical substances as appropriate.
35. The steps needed to prevent the diversion of pharmaceutical products with psychoactive properties to illicit uses should continue to be taken.
36. Measures to prevent the diversion of pharmaceutical products that could be used in the production of amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) should continue to be strengthened, as appropriate.
37. In applying control measures to limit the use of narcotic drugs exclusively to medical and scientific purposes, the availability of adequate supplies should be ensured. Availability exists when sufficient quantities are on hand and are accessible in accordance with international treaties
38. It is necessary to strengthen national agencies for the control of illicit drug trafficking and related crimes.
39. Mechanisms for the control of drug trafficking and all types of related crimes, including the development of capabilities for identifying and restricting emerging modalities, should also be optimized.
40. One of the main objectives of the suppression of illicit drug trafficking and related crimes should be the dismantling of criminal organizations and their support networks. In this regard, law enforcement measures must address not only the prosecution of those engaged in illicit activities, but also the tools used for such activities and the profits derived from them. Given the rapid evolution of criminal organizations, control agencies must be proactive and adapt to the dynamic nature of the problem of drug trafficking and related crimes, and thus develop specific intelligence gathering systems in order to detect routes and methods used by criminal organizations.
41. In the context of investigations into illicit drug trafficking and related crimes, the exchange of intelligence information through the appropriate institutions should be promoted, in accordance with specific national legislation.
42. To facilitate the prosecution and conviction of leaders and members of criminal organizations and their support networks, the adoption of measures for effective

cooperation in criminal investigations, investigation procedures, the collection of evidence, and the exchange of information among countries should be considered, assuring due respect for the various national legal systems.

43. Noting with concern the violence associated with the activities of criminal organizations involved in illicit drug trafficking and related crimes, it is necessary to prevent these organizations' access to any kind of weapons. To prevent the diversion of firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials, measures aimed at regulating and monitoring international trade therein should be strengthened, where appropriate.
44. Legislative and institutional frameworks on the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution, and control of the laundering of proceeds from illicit drug trafficking, the diversion of controlled chemical substances to illicit channels, and other serious transnational crimes, should be established, updated or reinforced, as appropriate, in accordance with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
45. National entities responsible for the management and disposition of assets seized and/or forfeited in cases of illicit drug trafficking, money laundering, and other related crimes should be established or strengthened, as appropriate.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

To achieve effective international cooperation, member states acknowledge the need to:

46. Reaffirm the principle of cooperation contained in the international instruments to address the world drug problem, through actions that guarantee their enforcement and effectiveness.
47. Stress the importance of ratifying, acceding to and complying with, as appropriate, the following conventions:

The United Nations Convention against Corruption (2003); the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) and its three protocols: the Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and the Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition; the Inter-American Convention Against Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials (CIFTA) (1997); the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (1996); the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (1992); the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988); the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961), amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971). Member states also recognize the importance of observing the agreements reached in the Political

Declaration on the World Drug Problem adopted by the 20th United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on drugs in 1998, and the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem (Vienna, 2009).

48. Foster international cooperation programs aimed at strengthening national policies to address the world drug problem based on the individual needs of each member state.
49. Promote the harmonization of national legal norms, regulations and internal procedures in order to implement hemispheric judicial cooperation mechanisms and mutual legal assistance in connection with drug trafficking and related crimes.
50. Strengthen member states' institutional capacity to prevent and effectively address drug trafficking, while recognizing the particularities of the challenges, harm and negative impact that producing, transit and consuming states face, by promoting and strengthening joint or coordinated operations and exchanging information and best practices.
51. To encourage and promote technical assistance as well as the exchange of best practices and lessons learned to address the world drug problem in regard to institutional capacity, demand reduction, supply reduction, and control measures.
52. To strengthen CICAD's institutional capacity to promote international cooperation aimed at the implementation of the recommendations that emanate from the MEM evaluation process, as well as the objectives of this Strategy and of its Action Plan.

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