

Multilateral
Evaluation
Mechanism
MEM

Venezuela

Evaluation of Progress in Drug Control

Organization of American States – **OAS**

Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission – **CICAD**

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Organización de los Estados Americanos – OEA
Comisión Interamericana para el Control del Abuso de Drogas – CICAD

Organization of American States – OAS
Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission – CICAD

Organização dos Estados Americanos – OEA
Comissão Interamericana para o Controle do Abuso de Drogas – CICAD

Organisation des Etats Américains – OEA
Commission Interaméricaine de Lutte Contre l'abus des Drogues – CICAD

NATIONAL ANTI-DRUG STRATEGY

Venezuela has a National Plan for the Prevention and Control of Drug Production, Trafficking, and Use, which covers the following areas: supply reduction, demand reduction and control measures. It does not cover the areas of institutional framework, Budget and Evaluation system. It should be noted that various administrative measures have been taken by Venezuela to begin to incorporate these areas to the national plan. The Plan was in effect from 1995-1999. Its administrative basis is derived from a Resolution of the Council of Ministers on July 19, 1995

There is a central coordinating authority entitled the National Commission Against Illicit Drug Use (CONACUID), which coordinates the areas of demand reduction, supply reduction, control measures and the information center. Its legal basis is the Organic Law on Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances of 1993. CONACUID has a budget that is part of the Ministry for the Secretariat of the Presidency.

Venezuela has ratified the United Nations Conventions of 1971 and 1988. It has acceded the United Nations Convention of 1961. It has ratified the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption. It has signed the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials.

It has national laws and regulations with respect to the issue of drugs, in accordance with international conventions. Specifically it has legislation relative to money laundering, chemical substances and firearms, ammunition and explosives in accordance with CICAD Model Regulations.

Venezuela has an integrated system for the collection and maintenance of statistics and documents. It also has a separate collection of documents and statistics in the following areas: Demand Reduction, Supply Reduction, and Control Measures. It has documents on the societal impact of illicit drugs. Venezuela has reported that it has statistics on this issue, which are currently being systematized.

Recommendations

1. **Incorporate an evaluation system into the National Anti-Drug Plan that makes it possible to analyze, monitor, and interpret information on the processes, effects, and impact of interventions in demand and supply reduction and control measures.**
2. **Ratify the Inter-American Convention against Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials.**

DEMAND REDUCTION

Venezuela has a National Drug Demand Reduction Strategy that constitutes the framework in place to effect demand reduction programs in every area. There is a national system of drug abuse prevention programs, which is a combination of efforts between various NGO's and Government Agencies.

There are prevention programs for school children, teachers, street children, prisoners, prison officers, community leaders, out of school youth and other at-risk groups.

"Drugs in the Workplace" programs are delivered by NGO's in the private sector but efforts to include development of programs within the public sector, and expansion of those in the private sector are presently under way.

Venezuela has adopted the UN Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction, and its Plan of Action.

There are guidelines on minimum standards of care for drug treatment in both public and private sector facilities. In Venezuela, there are drug treatment and rehabilitation programs that cover early detection and outreach, treatment, rehabilitation, social reintegration and after-care. Specialized professional training in drug abuse prevention and treatment is available at several universities.

Venezuela uses the Inter-American Uniform Drug Use Data System (SIDUC) to draw its sample for the measurement of drug use from patients in treatment centers. The average age of first use of any illicit drug is given to be 16 years. This data could not be representative of the level of drug use, or age of first use in the general population.

Research on prevention and drug use and evaluation of drug abuse prevention programs has been conducted. The annual incidence of new drug users is not available. Studies have been conducted to evaluate the various treatment and rehabilitation programs and measure many of the significant variables in order to determine effectiveness.

Recommendations

1. Expand "Drugs in the Workplace" programs in the private sector and implement programs within the public sector.
2. Establish a mechanism for determining the prevalence of drug use in the general population, the age of first use, the type of drugs used, and the annual incidence of new drug users.

SUPPLY REDUCTION

The country's most recent data on the area of illicit cultivation is from 1997. There were 21 hectares of illicit cannabis and 166 hectares of poppy in the Perijá area, which were eradicated manually. The country does not have data from subsequent years. Since the total area of new crops in the country's only cultivation area, Sierra de Perijá in the State of Zulia, which borders the Republic of Colombia, is not known, the National Commission Against Illicit Drug Use (CONACUID) is taking the necessary steps to request international cooperation to determine the new areas of cultivation and the production capacity of the cultivated area, in order to comply with international commitments.

Preparations are under way for a new Organic Law on controlling chemicals, precursors, and other essential products for the production of narcotics and psychotropic substances which will improve chemical substance control mechanisms.

Venezuela has independent agencies for controlling the diversion of controlled chemical substances and pharmaceuticals, as well as for exchanging operational information thereon at the national and international levels. This is the responsibility of CONACUID and the Ministry of Health and Social Development, respectively. It also has systems for estimating the country's legitimate annual needs for both types of substances, based on use in recent years.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development is in charge of monitoring and regulating professions involved in the distribution and use of pharmaceuticals.

Venezuela has independent mechanisms for controlling, at national and international levels, the exchange of operational information for the control of chemical substances and pharmaceuticals. This is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and Social Development and CONACUID respectively. Venezuela uses the CICAD Inter-American Telecommunications Systems for Drug Control (RETCOD) to exchange information in this area.

In 1999, it reported the seizure of the following controlled chemical substances:

Controlled Chemical Substances	Quantity Seized	Quantity Disposed of	Unit of Measurement
Acetone	6,600	in storage	Liters
Methyl ethyl ketone	2,400	in storage	Liters
Potassium permanganate	73,510	in storage	Kilograms

Laws and regulations imposing penal and administrative sanctions against the diversion of pharmaceuticals and controlled chemical substances are in place. In the civil area there are rules regarding the diversion of pharmaceuticals. In implementing such laws and regulations, it has applied penal sanctions for pharmaceuticals and 3 sanctions for controlled chemical substances. It also reported 3 administrative sanctions for controlled chemical substances.

In terms of international transactions involving controlled substances, Venezuela did not export any controlled chemical substances in 1999. It also indicates that it is not an exporter of pharmaceuticals. In 1999, it received 52 pre-export notifications and replied to five of them. The database is being re-designed so as to reduce time lags in obtaining information. In addition, Venezuela issued eight requests for technical assistance based on international agreements regarding control chemical substances; it received replies to all of them.

Recommendations

1. **Continue systematic eradication of illicit cultivation.**
2. **Develop a system to identify illicit crop location and area, as well as production potential.**
3. **Strengthen the application of 1988 Vienna Convention, issuing pre-export notifications for controlled chemical substances.**
4. **Improve mechanisms to control the diversion of controlled chemical substances from legal industry to illegal industry.**

CONTROL MEASURES

Venezuela has law enforcement, judicial, and administrative agencies responsible for investigating, controlling, and eliminating illicit drug trafficking. The law enforcement agencies are the Technical and Judicial Police, Municipal Police, State Police, and the Armed Forces for Cooperation. The administrative agency mentioned is the National Commission against Illicit Drug Use (CONACUID). The judicial agencies with competence in this area are the courts.

The National Commission against Illicit Drug Use is the body responsible for coordinating national and international interagency information exchanges and collaboration. For these purposes, it has two administrative units: the Joint

Information Coordination Center (C.I.C.C.) and the Anti-Drug Information center (CINADRO). This information supports operational entities, such as the technical Judicial Police (C.T.P.J.) and the National Guard's Anti-Drug Command.

Venezuela does not provide the number of drug seizure operations. However, it does provide the quantity of drugs seized:

Drug Type	Unit	Quantity
Heroin	Kgs	41
Cocaine Base	Kgs	12,150
Basuco (residues or impurities)	Kgs	257
Leaf Cannabis (grass)	Kgs	13,050

It also reports the number of arrests for traffic and/or possession (5,429), persons charged (3,203 or 59% of arrests), and convictions (480 or 15% of charged) for these offenses.

Regarding the number of requests made for international cooperation in investigating and prosecuting drug traffickers, and the number of replies thereto, Venezuela received 17, which are pending response.

Venezuela has not criminalized the illicit manufacture, trafficking, exportation, and importation of firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials.

Venezuela has in place administrative controls for the prevention of the illicit manufacture, trafficking, exportation, and importation of the above items, as well as laws and regulations authorizing the freezing or seizure of such articles. The Weapons and Explosives Division of the Armed Forces is responsible for maintaining a record of the manufacture, importation, exportation, and transit of firearms, ammunition, and related materials, as well as interagency coordination and information exchange.

Venezuela does not report the number of persons charged or convicted for this type of offense. It also does not indicate the number of seizure operations or the quantities of firearms, ammunition, explosives, or other related materials seized in connection with drug trafficking offenses in 1999. Venezuela also reports that it identifies the origin of firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials, as well as the routing employed in their diversion.

Venezuela does not provide data on requests for international cooperation to investigate and prosecute offenses related to the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials—neither the number of requests made nor replies thereto is provided, since it has not signed agreements on this matter.

Venezuela has defined the offense of asset laundering in its national legislation, to cover the suppression and prevention of the laundering of drug trafficking proceeds. Preventive administrative controls are also in place. It has national laws that authorize the freezing or seizure and forfeiture of such proceeds.

It has the National Financial Intelligence Unit, which process data obtained from reports of suspicious transactions. Financial and other institutions are required by law to report suspicious transactions. There are two agencies that manage drug trafficking proceeds: the Ministry of Finance and the CONACUID. The Report on Venezuela does not indicate the number of arrests or convictions, but does give the number of persons charged (16). In the area of administrative sanctions, it only reports one sanction for failure to report suspicious transactions to oversight bodies.

Regarding the number of administrative and/or regulatory sanctions applied by supervisory agencies against financial institutions and others responsible, as well as judicial sanctions for failure to report suspicious transactions and other failures to comply with their legal responsibilities during the last year several have been applied: 1 Savings and Loan; 1 Currency Exchange. 6 in process: 4 Currency Exchanges; 1 Savings and Loan; 1 Financial Institution; and 1 found inadmissible.

Venezuela has initiated 7 requests for international cooperation in investigating and prosecuting money-laundering offenses, all of which are pending reply.

Recommendations

1. **Improve the data bank to identify the number of drug seizure operations conducted by law enforcement agencies.**
2. **Create a register and/or data bank to identify the number of persons charged and convicted for trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other materials in connection with illicit drug trafficking.**
3. **Promote the signature and ratification of international cooperation agreements to ensure application of control measures linked to the manufacture, trafficking, export, and import of firearms, ammunition, and explosives.**

HUMAN, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC COST OF DRUGS

Estimating the human, social and economic cost of the drug problem in all of its manifestations constitutes a complex process. This information is relevant to each country's understanding of the magnitude of the drug problem. This would enable each country to appreciate the direct and indirect cost in proportion

to their Gross National Product or national annual budget. Because many countries have difficulty in providing these estimates, CICAD is proposing a hemispheric-wide program involving training and technical assistance, which should assist the country in its effort in confronting the drug problem and fulfilling this indicator's requirements.

Recommendation

- 1. Develop the capacity to estimate the human, social, and economic cost of the drug problem.**

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

CICAD recommends that Venezuela's national anti-drug efforts be strengthened by addressing the following recommendations:

1. Incorporate an evaluation system into the National Anti-Drug Plan that makes it possible to analyze, monitor, and interpret information on the processes, effects, and impact of interventions in demand and supply reduction and control measures.
2. Ratify the Inter-American Convention against Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials.
3. Expand "Drugs in the Workplace" programs in the private sector and implement programs within the public sector.
4. Establish a mechanism for determining the prevalence of drug use in the general population, the age of first use, the type of drugs used, and the annual incidence of new drug users.
5. Continue systematic eradication of illicit cultivation.
6. Develop a system to identify illicit crop location and area, as well as production potential.
7. Strengthen the application of 1988 Vienna Convention, issuing pre-export notifications for controlled chemical substances.
8. Improve mechanisms to control the diversion of controlled chemical substances from legal industry to illegal industry.
9. Improve the data bank to identify the number of drug seizure operations conducted by law enforcement agencies.
10. Create a register and/or data bank to identify the number of persons charged and convicted for trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other materials in connection with illicit drug trafficking
11. Promote the signature and ratification of international cooperation agreements to ensure application of control measures linked to the manufacture, trafficking, export, and import of firearms, ammunition, and explosives.
12. Develop the capacity to estimate the human, social, and economic cost of the drug problem.