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**INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE
CONTROL COMMISSION**

CICAD

Organization of American States

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Secretariat for Multidimensional Security

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**SPEECH BY EMBASSADOR ADAM BLACKWELL
SECRETARY FOR MULTIDIMENSIONAL SECURITY, OAS**

Mr. Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic, Dr. Alberto D'Alotto,
Mr. Chair of the Commission, (my friend) Chan Santhoki,
Mr. Vice Chair of the Commission, (my esteemed) José Ramón Granero,
Distinguished Principal Representatives of the Commission:

On behalf of the Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Dr. José Miguel Insulza, I am pleased to welcome you to the Fiftieth Regular Session of CICAD, at which we celebrate the twenty-five years that have gone by since the creation of this fruitful Commission.

As I have stated on other occasions, the work of this Commission is of vital importance to the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security that I have the honor of heading. Your work in the CICAD area is not only the hemispheric reference point and guide on the issue of drug policy; in addition, because of the impact this problem has on society, it is a fundamental component of the actions we pursue within the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security.

And while it is true that the world and our region have changed over the past quarter-century, it is also true that the phenomenon of drug use and abuse, and of drug trafficking, is a part of human insecurity as defined in the 2003 Declaration on Security in the Americas. Thus, for example:

- It influences the undermining of human rights
- It has a negative impact on economic and social development
- It contributes to conditions of social exclusion
- It interferes with the education of our young people
- It increases the conditions of poverty faced by at-risk populations
- It poses a constant threat to the population's health

In addition, since this is not a new problem, the drugs problem continues to serve as a negative factor in the challenges set out in that Declaration. For example:

- It has ties to terrorism
- It erodes social cohesion and contributes to insecurity within states
- It helps the spread of HIV/AIDS
- It affects the environment
- It is related to other offenses perpetrated by organized crime
- It contributes to cybersecurity risks

Briefly stated, successes and failures in responding to the global drugs problem are successes and failures in the general response to the multidimensional insecurity that is of such concern to the Organization's member states. This Commission's work is therefore of key importance, and the responsibility placed on you is unavoidable.

Because, unfortunately, we have to address such negative facts as the following:

1. In the Americas, crime and violence kill more people than AIDS or any other known pandemic
2. Crime and violence destroy more households than any of the economic crises we have ever faced
3. In 2009, at least 375,000 people met violent deaths
4. A figure close to 200 million – several times the population of many of our member states – were victims of crime

5. More than two thirds of the abductions on our planet took place in our region
6. There were 366 homicides a day: 15 every hour, one every four minutes. If the 2009 statistics still apply – and there is nothing to indicate that they are falling in global terms – while I have been speaking, two people have been murdered
7. And, as a specific drug-related fact, on a day like today almost three tons of cocaine are produced

At the same time, in their everyday actions, the criminal organizations that operate in many of our countries are trying to alter institutional democratic processes and serve as agents of corruption in the public and private spheres.

I wanted to place those facts in the context of your work because, as is clear, they are tied in with the actions that you carry out on a day-to-day basis in your countries and that are a part of the hemispheric context in which this Commission acts.

And after reading this agenda, after fifty meetings, looking to the past and forward to the future, there is another fact I would like to share with you, the product of the conviction born of evidence: CICAD is one of the jewels in this Organization's crown. On your twenty-fifth anniversary, you are taking up the reins of a process of transformations – always healthy for an organization – in the following way:

- Designing a MEM that is adapted to a different reality;
- Your new Executive Secretary pauses to ask how we are to proceed, what is expected of his actions, **SINCE WE HAVE A NEW HEMISPHERIC DRUGS STRATEGY AND A NEW PLAN OF ACTION**; and
- The authorities are wondering whether this body should be organized differently, with meetings that are more attractive, more effective, more efficient.

And even with that task ahead of it, this group takes the time to go further than intellectual concern alone to propose paths for action indicated by past reflections. As since now, fortunately, we have more and better information, both in the Argentine Observatory and in our own, the Inter-American Drug Observatory, experiences can be shared so that the basis for any endeavor in this field, be it political or programmatic, is based on the evidence that the new strategy demands.

And we will have the opportunity to hear how several of the countries that face a different problem with the consumption of smokeable forms of cocaine and with the violence that it produces, which also affects several sectors of society, are developing a program with a global view for the subregion.

At the same time, in an effort to integrate the results of the different programs and lines of action pursued by the Commission's Executive Secretariat, we are going to explore the results and future expectations of judicially supervised drug treatment tribunals as a valid, possible, and efficient alternative to custodial sentences that could break the circle of drug use, addiction, crime, and violence.

I must also applaud the inclusion of a topic that is a common cause of concern for all of us here: the material possibility of our work continuing. Nothing of what we discuss here has any meaning if, at the end of the day, we are unable to go on because we lack resources for action.

Some years ago, Secretary General Insulza floated the idea of allocating a part of the assets seized from drug traffickers to a fund to finance programs and projects that would seek both to alleviate

the catastrophic consequences of drug abuse and illegal trafficking and would contribute to increased security in the Americas – really, nothing different than what was proposed twenty-five years ago in the Río Program that gave life to this Commission. The outcome of that initiative was the BIDAL Project, the results of which will be presented over the coming days. My hope is that the countries, as they progress in securing those assets, will be able to make a reality of the fund proposed, with visionary foresight, in the Río Program.

Also worthy of note is the way in which CICAD is involving itself in the COPOLAD program, seeking out synergies and opportunities for actions financed by the European Union in our hemisphere to be adapted to our hemispheric view of the problem. That is good multilateralism, intelligent multilateralism, the kind that sets women and men from two different parts of the world to work together to address a shared problem.

I can conceive of no future for the CICAD other than the one that it is assigning itself. And you can count on my support for facilitating it to the best of my abilities.

Thank you very much.