

Speech

Organization of American States



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THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
OPENING OF THE 34TH REGULAR SESSION OF CICAD
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I thank the Attorney General of Mexico, Rafael Macedo de la Concha, who has achieved so much as President of CICAD during the last twelve months.

I would like to begin by welcoming you in the name of Secretary General César Gaviria, and thanking the Canadian government, through Solicitor General Wayne Easter, and Senior Assistant Deputy Solicitor General Paul Kennedy, for making this meeting possible.

Je vous remercie et je remercie le Canada, pais membre de l'OEA qui n'a jamais hésité en nous appuyer et en faire avancer la coopération multilatérale comme élément décisif de la défense de l'intérêt national.

This 34th Regular Session of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) is taking place at a time of severe challenges to previously accepted ways of thinking and working. These challenges are both open and camouflaged, and they affect both our participative democratic systems and our capacity for multilateral cooperation. National needs and world conditions are imposing implacable dynamics. Our response must be equally strong.

The challenges facing this particular meeting of the Commission are not only substantial, they force us to work on the most difficult of stages: the defense of national interests through multilateral cooperation. The best of our efforts will be barely enough.

The total impact of drug trafficking and drug abuse on our societies is enormous and not fully known or understood, even now, nearly a generation after CICAD's founding.

Only a few years ago, CICAD had a clear, unitary mission: to stop drugs, and an equally direct approach: to do so by shutting down supply. This scope of work facing this Commission has changed dramatically. Supply is now understood to encompass a wide variety of specialized industrial chemicals, organic-based drugs, synthetics and medicines, as well as very ordinary commodities such as cement; all used in a bewildering variety of production processes leading to diversion and abuse. The world of drugs could be described as resembling a new kind of globalized supermarket.

Marketing requirements in this shadowy supermarket include laundering of drug money and corruption, and a growing galaxy of other crimes. Some of these crimes are closely associated to drug trafficking, such as arms trafficking. Other criminal activities sometimes associated with illegal drug movements have less direct ties. Examples of the latter are kidnapping and trafficking in persons.

Illegal drugs have become an industry that reaches far beyond its origins. Its revenues finance organized crime, guerrilla war and terrorism. Drug production, usage and attempted controls have infected traditional relationships, penetrated many strata of society and acquired political dimensions that damage political and even regional stability.

Fortunately, CICAD has not stood still. It has negotiated Model Regulations on Money Laundering and is working with countries on setting up or consolidating Financial Intelligence Units. CICAD has taken on illicit arms trafficking, developing the framework for CIFTA, and now stimulating its effective implementation.

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But although the consolidation of these efforts is essential, the time has also come for fresh initiatives and rethinking. For example, CICAD has played an important part in demand reduction, particularly in prevention and treatment. But efforts to date are clearly not enough. Additional research is needed into both causes and methods. Programs must be evaluated so that the real effects on demand reduction can be known.

CICAD has invested in alternative development. But at its last session, the Commission examined the proposition that existing models for alternative development may not be working. We must look further into this as well.

The legal status of drugs and their use continue to be highly controversial. Voices at the extremes of the spectrum of opinion can be heard to praise or condemn the use of specific substances for medical ends or even just to enhance certain lifestyles. Effective prevention and enforcement must take these currents into account.

The Commission must find ways to adjust to, and even anticipate these many kinds of changes in the global drug dynamic. One of CICAD's projects in Bolivia facilitates the issuance of legal titles to land ownership. This exemplifies the essential if sometimes apparently tenuous relationship between drugs and vital social institutions. Each country is unique. Each situation is different, down to the most local and even individual levels. Yet the problem crosses borders and is truly transnational. We represent national governments, yet as Solicitor General Easter just pointed out, we must learn to work not only with each other respecting sovereignty and increasing capacity, but we must learn to work with new partners: municipalities, non-governmental groups, and private industry at the same time that we sustain and adapt ties to our traditional partners in the legal, health and enforcement communities. The establishment of priorities, and of a strategy that takes into account these many factors will be extremely difficult and I was glad to hear that Canada is proposing it as a topic for the next meeting of the Commission.

The specific courses of action already prepared for this meeting are very important. Changes have been proposed to CICAD's Model Regulations for the Control of the International Movement of Firearms, and most importantly, the inclusion of arms-brokering provisions. This Commission should approve them. This would support the findings earlier this year of the General Secretariat of the OAS when it issued a report on the diversion of Nicaraguan military arms to the United Self Defense Forces of Colombia. The objective is to prevent similar diversions of arms to the FARC and other narco-terrorist organizations.

Other steps we could take here in Montreal would be to adopt the recommendations recently developed by our Expert Groups on Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals and the one on Demand Reduction and Money Laundering.

This Commission will also be looking at another area of hemispheric need - that of maritime cooperation. We now have the results of a study requested at CICAD's 32nd and 33rd sessions which include recommendations for action by the Secretariat, by the countries and for the hemisphere in general. Here, too, your decisions will be important.

It is also critically important that the Commission think big. The implications of Organized Crime in this new century, one which already is much altered from the century which so recently became part of the past, are staggering. The conclusions from the October meeting in Mexico City call for our member states to move in advance of the full impact of what is happening in a globalized framework for organized crime.

The same is true with respect to hemispheric security, which now takes on a very different set of meanings than those familiar only a few years ago. The Special Conference on Security also held in Mexico City just three weeks ago identified a number of new transnational problems as threats to the security of the states of this hemisphere. The Declaration on Security specifically identified transnational organized crime, the global drug problem, corruption, asset laundering, illicit trafficking in weapons, and the connections among them; as

well as trafficking in persons, among others, as threats to regional and national security. CICAD will need more than ever to work out appropriate divisions of labor.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our countries and our peoples await these decisions, and we are here for this purpose. We have the support of our regional authorities as well as the national governments. The OAS General Assembly made governability the central focus of hemispheric efforts. The Summit of the Americas in Quebec City gave life to the MEM and will meet in extraordinary session in Mexico in January. It is my hope, and that of the Secretary General, that CICAD's leadership, already established by the Hemispheric Anti-Drug Strategy and the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism, will be proven once again in confronting these new imperatives. The Canadian concern for increased cross border cooperation may be a particularly fruitful area.

David Beall and his team, and you the CICAD Commissioners, have done much to strengthen this hemisphere's capacity to respond to illegal trafficking in drugs and its related ills. We look forward over the next four days to sharing our experiences, maintaining continuity and making the decisions needed to deepen our multilateral cooperation.

Thank you very much.

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