

Venezuela

Evaluation of Progress in Drug Control 2005-2006

MEM

Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism



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





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**ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)
Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD)**

**Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM)
Governmental Expert Group (GEG)**

VENEZUELA

**EVALUATION OF PROGRESS IN DRUG CONTROL
2005–2006**



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- National Anti-drug Office:
 - Office Planning and Budget;
 - Office of International Affairs;
 - Office of Communication and Institutional Affairs;
 - Department of Demand Reduction;
 - Office of Administration and Finance;
 - Department of Supply Reduction;
 - Anti-Money Laundering Department;
 - Office of Legal Counsel;
 - Venezuelan Drug Observatory;
 - Office of Technology and Information Systems.
- Ministry of Health, Division of Drugs, Medications and Cosmetics;
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Department of Consular Affairs, International Affairs Coordinating Office;
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PREFACE

The Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) is a diagnostic tool designed by all 34 member states of the Organization of American States (OAS) to periodically carry out comprehensive, multilateral evaluations of the progress of actions taken by member states and by the hemisphere as a whole, in dealing with the drug problem. The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), an OAS specialized agency, implemented this Mechanism in 1998, pursuant to a mandate from the Second Summit of the Americas held in Santiago, Chile in 1998.

The MEM is not only an evaluation instrument, but has also become a vehicle for disseminating information on the progress achieved by individual and collective efforts of OAS member state governments, catalyzing hemispheric cooperation, promoting dialogue among member state government authorities and precisely channeling assistance to areas requiring greater attention by optimizing resources. The MEM process itself is assessed by the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG), comprised of delegations from the 34 member states, which meets before the onset of each MEM evaluation round to review and improve all operational aspects of the mechanism, including the indicators of the evaluation questionnaire.

National evaluation reports are drafted by experts from each member state, with experts not working on their own country's report, guaranteeing the transparent multilateral nature of the MEM. Each chapter is based on countries' responses to a questionnaire of indicators covering the main thematic areas of institution building, demand reduction, supply reduction and control measures as well as subsequent comments and updated information provided by the government-appointed coordinating entities.

This report covers the full country evaluation for the MEM Fourth Round evaluation period 2005–2006. The follow-up report on the implementation progress of recommendations assigned to Venezuela will be published in June 2009. All MEM reports can be accessed through the following webpage: www.cicad.oas.org.



INTRODUCTION

Venezuela has a population of 25,730,435 (2006) and a total area of 916,445 km². The literacy rate is 93.4%. Venezuela is a federal republic that is divided into 23 states and one capital. The country has a GDP¹ per capita of US\$ 6,900 (2006) and an inflation rate of 15.8% (2006). Venezuelan exports total US\$ 69.23 billion annually with its chief exports being petroleum, bauxite and aluminum, steel, chemicals, agricultural products, and basic manufactured goods.

I. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

A. National Anti-drug Strategy

Venezuela's 2002–2007 National Anti-drug Plan was approved by the President in the Council of Ministers on June 11, 2002. The National Anti-drug Plan covers actions in the areas of supply reduction, demand reduction, development programs on preventing and reducing the cultivation of illicit crops, drug production or trafficking, control measures, money laundering, program evaluation, and seized assets.

The state and municipal governments of Venezuela have jurisdiction in areas related to anti-drug policies, through the execution of plans.

The 2002–2007 National Anti-drug Plan has an allocated budget funded through direct allocation from the state's general budget, and through international cooperation.

Executed Budget of the National Anti-drug Plan

Area	Executed Budget (US\$)		
	2004	2005	2006
Demand reduction	446,626.13	593,644.68	948,960.11
Supply reduction	446,626.13	593,644.68	**
Development programs related to the prevention or reduction of illicit crops or drug production or trafficking	This component is included under supply reduction		
Strengthening international relations	148,870.54	189,966.29	82,498.84
Administrative support	0.00	0.00	2,323,595.56
Money laundering	148,880.21	205,796.84	386,065.35

** In 2006, the budget for demand reduction was financed by an allocation from the budget of the Ministry of the Interior and Justice, whose funds have not been reported.

¹ Gross Domestic Product



The National Anti-drug Office (ONA), attached to the Ministry of Interior and Justice, is the national authority that coordinates and implements anti-drug policy in Venezuela. ONA was created by Executive Decree No. 4220 of January 23, 2006, and is responsible for coordinating actions in the areas of supply reduction, demand reduction, development programs related to the prevention and reduction of illicit crops and the production or trafficking of drugs, control measures, the drug observatory, international cooperation, program evaluation, and seized assets.

The State's budget allocation to the National Anti-drug Office was US\$1,191,003 in 2004, US\$1,818,899 in 2005, and US\$ 4,545,794 in 2006.

CICAD notes that the country has a national anti-drug strategy and recognizes the efforts made by Venezuela in implementing the National Anti-drug Plan, as well as the participation of the state and municipal levels of government, within their spheres of jurisdiction, in executing anti-drug plans.

B. International Conventions

Venezuela has ratified the following conventions:

- Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, 1992 (November 1995);
- Inter-American Convention against Corruption, 1996 (March 1995);
- Inter-American Convention against Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and other Related Materials (CIFTA), 1997 (April 2002);
- United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol (December 1968);
- United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971 (May 1972);
- United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988 (July 1991);
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000 (May 2002), the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (April 2002), and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (May 2002).

Venezuela has not ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption, 2003, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982, or the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components, and Ammunition of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000.

The country reports that during the evaluation period it enacted two regulations in accordance with the international conventions indicated above: The Organic Law against Organized Crime, and the Organic Law against Illicit Traffic and Consumption of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances.

CICAD notes that Venezuela has signed and ratified most of the international conventions dealing with illicit drug trafficking and related crimes, in accordance with the MEM guidelines. However, the country has not yet acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982, or the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components, and Ammunition of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000. The country has not ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption, 2003.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. ACCEDE TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA, 1982.
2. RATIFY THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION, 2003.
3. RATIFY THE PROTOCOL AGAINST THE ILLICIT MANUFACTURING OF AND TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS, THEIR PARTS AND COMPONENTS, AND AMMUNITION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME, A RECOMMENDATION REITERATED FROM THE SECOND EVALUATION ROUND, 2001–2002.

C. National Information System

The Venezuelan Drug Observatory is the centralized office that organizes, compiles, and coordinates drug-related statistics and other drug-related information. The country reports that the methodology used to gather, compile, analyze and report drug abuse statistics is that stipulated for application of the standardized instruments of CICAD's Inter-American Uniform Drug Use Data System (SIDUC).

During the 2004–2006 period, the country carried out the Survey of Secondary-School Pupils and the National Household Survey.²

Studies Conducted in the Years 2004–2006

Studies	2004	2005	2006
Priority Studies			
Survey of secondary school students	—	x	x
National household survey	—	x	—
Access to patient registers of treatment centers in the country	x	x	x
Recommended Studies			
Cross-section survey of patients in treatment centers	x	x	x
Survey of patients in emergency rooms	—	—	x

The country has most of the indicators necessary to conduct a study on the economic or social costs of drugs.

² This study was conducted by a Spanish company (WDC) through the "Drug Use Prevention Program" financed by the European Union. The structure of the instrument is not fully consistent with SIDUC/CICAD standardized guidelines.

**Indicators Available for Conducting a Study on the Cost of Drugs**

	2004	2005	2006
Number of requests for drug treatment in public and private institutions	x	x	x
Number of drug-related deaths or serious injuries	x	x	x
Substance use studies in the general population, among students, or in the workplace	x	x	x
Number of substance-use induced hospital admissions and length of stay	–	–	x
Number of persons undergoing drug treatment, type of treatment, and length of treatment	–	x	x
Arrests for possession and drug use	–	x	x
Number of persons incarcerated for crimes or offenses connected with drug use	x	x	x

The National Anti-drug Office (ONA) has a “Counseling and Referral Center for Drug Addicts”, whose mission is to help drug dependents obtain treatment and rehabilitation; it also helps friends and family as well as the general public with the problem of drug use and its treatment. The estimated number of people served was 269 in 2004, 107 in 2005, and 304 in 2006.

CICAD recognizes the country’s efforts in carrying out studies on the extent of drug use and the establishment of the Counseling and Referral Center for Drug Addicts to provide assistance to the general public.

II. DEMAND REDUCTION

A. Prevention

Venezuela is implementing drug abuse prevention programs in key sectors of the population: school and university students, out-of-school youths, adults, women, indigenous groups, workplaces, prison inmates, and other at-risk groups. The programs and activities being implemented are shown below in the following table:


Programs and Activities for Targeted Populations

Target Population	Number of Participants	Program Name/Activity
School children and university students		
• Pre-school: ages 3 to 6	625	Teaching Life Skills
• Primary: ages 7 to 12	85,519	Comprehensive Prevention in the School Setting
• Secondary: ages 13 to 18	72,666	Comprehensive Prevention in the School Setting
• Tertiary (university)	80,012	“Universities Take Up the Challenge”
Community-based programs for youth (outside of school system)		
• Working children: ages 8 to 17	1,150	Mission About Face
• Street/abandoned children: ages 6 to 18	1,499	Mission About Face
• Entertainers, Instructors, Families	2,412	Mission About Face
Community-based programs for adults	Not available	Prevention in communities Reducing risk factors and strengthening protective factors Training prevention mediators
Women	6,137	Comprehensive violence and drug use prevention
Indigenous groups	3,035	—
Workplace	138,990	Workplace prevention
• Business Advisors Training Program	66	—
Incarcerated individuals	320	Comprehensive Prevention Strategies
Mentally disabled persons, indigenous persons, firefighters, youth gangs	4,699	Comprehensive Prevention in the Area of Drugs

Venezuela reports that several universities in the country offer courses on prevention and treatment in the general curriculum for students in disciplines related to the field of drug abuse.

During 2004–2006, specialized training for drug abuse prevention, treatment, and research was offered in the country through refresher courses, diploma courses, master’s degrees, regional training programs, and university fellowships.

Venezuela has a system for the accreditation or licensing of demand reduction professionals. ONA is authorized under the Organic Law against Illicit Traffic and Consumption of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances to create a Directory of Professionals and Specialists for specific activities in the area of demand reduction.

Venezuela reports that during the evaluation period it conducted evaluations of substance abuse prevention programs in schools in Hatillo and Baruta, including students and teachers, and workplace and community prevention programs.



CICAD acknowledges the country's efforts in implementing drug abuse prevention programs in key sectors of the population, as well as the development of training courses; nevertheless, CICAD observes that many of the prevention programs demonstrated reduced levels of coverage. Therefore, CICAD encourages the country to take the necessary actions to increase the coverage of prevention programs targeting the student population.

RECOMMENDATION:

4. INCREASE THE COVERAGE OF DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS FOR THE STUDENT POPULATION.

B. Treatment

Venezuela's Regulations on the Operation of Public and Private Sector Drug Addiction Treatment Facilities were issued by the Ministry of Health and Social Development and approved in Official Gazette No. 36.291 of September 15, 1997. These regulations are mandatory and supported by the Organic Law on Public Administration and the Organic Law on Health.

ONA and the Ministry of Health are the government institutions responsible for maintaining the registry of drug addiction treatment centers and programs, as well as the registration and accreditation of treatment services and programs. Both institutions and the respective Joint Commissions are responsible for verifying compliance with the regulations on drug use treatment and for evaluating the quality of services provided. These institutions conduct evaluations each year and use the evaluation methodology in supervising and evaluating the quality of care provided by treatment, rehabilitation, and social reintegration facilities for drug users, using a tool adapted for this purpose.

Venezuela reports that it is implementing the "National Treatment, Rehabilitation, and Social Reintegration System," with technical assistance from CICAD, in order to integrate the country's drug dependency treatment facilities.

The country provides ongoing training or short refresher courses for drug treatment personnel, and holds workshops to promote, at the state and regional levels, the formulation of drug treatment action plans.

The drug treatment modalities used in Venezuela are directed at both adults and minors of both genders. Venezuela has 13 public programs and 21 private programs providing outpatient treatment, and 12 public and 69 private residential programs.

Venezuela reports that the total number of patients who received treatment was 6,374 in 2004, 6,433 in 2005, and 3,459 in 2006. The country reports that the total number of treatment programs was 80 in 2004, 93 in 2005 and 136 in 2006.

CICAD recognizes that the country has minimum standards and supervisory mechanisms for treatment services, and that it is making efforts to diversify the treatment services available. Furthermore, CICAD notes with satisfaction the existence of significant drug abuse treatment services.

C. Statistics on Consumption

Venezuela has studies on the magnitude of drug abuse in the school population, and provides this information in the following tables:



2005 – Prevalence of Drug Use in the School Population

	Lifetime (Percentage)			Last 12 Months (Percentage)			Last 30 Days (Percentage)		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Alcohol	41.62	36.18	38.51	32.31	27.21	29.40	23.43	18.52	20.69
Tobacco	14.20	10.55	12.17	8.04	4.85	6.33	5.22	2.84	3.95
Marijuana	2.15	0.87	1.48	1.58	0.57	1.04	0.94	0.18	0.54
Heroin	0.55	0.13	0.34	0.43	0.09	0.27	0.35	0.08	0.21
Basuco, Coca Paste	0.66	0.15	0.41	0.60	0.06	0.32	0.33	0.02	0.16
Cocaine HCl	0.76	0.24	0.51	0.57	0.12	0.34	0.37	0.10	0.22
Crack	0.62	0.15	0.37	0.49	0.10	0.28	0.35	0.03	0.18
Tranquilizer/Sedative/ Depresant	2.19	3.05	2.62	1.20	1.56	1.37	0.75	0.85	0.79
Stimulants	1.17	0.64	0.88	0.63	0.42	0.51	0.57	0.36	0.45
MDMA (Ecstasy)	0.81	0.21	0.49	0.74	0.08	0.39	0.47	0.05	0.24

2005 – Incidence of Drug Use in the School Population

School Population (13–17 Years Old)						
Type of Drug	Last 12 Months (Percentage)			Last 30 Days (Percentage)		
	M	F	Población total	M	F	Población total
Alcohol	26.76	22.24	24.21	16.18	10.59	13.10
Tobacco	6.23	3.85	4.96	2.76	1.32	2.01
Marijuana	1.31	0.42	0.83	0.53	0.11	0.30
Heroin	0.39	0.11	0.25	0.31	0.04	0.17
Basuco, Coca Paste	0.44	0.10	0.26	0.26	0.04	0.14
Cocaine HCl	0.37	0.15	0.25	0.20	0.04	0.12
Crack	0.34	0.10	0.21	0.21	0.03	0.11
Tranquilizer/Sedative/Depresant	1.10	1.71	1.40	0.49	0.59	0.54
Stimulants	0.69	0.43	0.55	0.35	0.17	0.25

The country has an estimate of the percentage of youths that perceive drug use as being harmful to their health and well-being. The percentages that follow are for the 13–17 age group.



National Survey of Drug Use in the School Population

Category	Percentage of those surveyed who believe that persons who carry out the following activities are at a moderate or great risk
Occasionally smoke cigarettes	61.6
Often smoke cigarettes	79.9
Often drink alcoholic drinks	75.0
Get drunk	80.5
Occasionally take non-prescribed tranquilizers/stimulants	64.7
Often take non-prescribed tranquilizers/stimulants	70.4
Occasionally inhale solvents	56.0
Often inhale solvents	79.4
Occasionally smoke marijuana	73.4
Often smoke marijuana	85.9
Occasionally take cocaine or crack	75.1
Often take cocaine or crack	79.7
Occasionally use coca paste	68.6
Often use coca paste	72.3
Occasionally take ecstasy	66.7
Often take ecstasy	86.4

The country had an estimate of the number of drug-related deaths in 2005 covering: alcohol (45), hashish and marijuana (5), types of cocaine (29), tranquilizers, sedatives and depressants that were not prescribed or used therapeutically (14), and other drugs (96), for a total of 189 drug-related deaths.

CICAD acknowledges that Venezuela has completed studies on the prevalence of drug use in the general and school populations. However, CICAD notes that the country has not made progress in conducting studies of the general population.

RECOMMENDATION:

5. CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE MAGNITUDE OF DRUG USE IN THE GENERAL POPULATION.

III. SUPPLY REDUCTION

A. Drug Production

Venezuela does not have a system to detect and quantify the area of illicit crops. Nevertheless, the country reports that it detects illicit crops through the use of photographic techniques and aerial reconnaissance in border areas.



Since 1988 Venezuela has had a program to eradicate illicit crops called “Operation Sierra”. The country reports that 21 hectares of cannabis were eradicated in 2005. In addition, 118 hectares of coca plantations were eradicated in 2004 and 40 hectares in 2005; for poppy plants, the figures were 87 hectares in 2004 and 154 hectares in 2005. The country reports that no eradication activities were carried out in 2006.

Venezuela reports that there have been no major seizures of cannabis plants grown indoors. No synthetic drug laboratories were detected during the evaluation period.

CICAD notes with concern that the country does not have a system to detect and quantify the area of illicit crops and did not continue its eradication activities in 2006.

RECOMMENDATION:

6. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO DETECT AND QUANTIFY THE AREA OF ILLICIT CROPS.

B. Control of Pharmaceutical Products

Venezuela reports that the laws and regulations in place for the control of pharmaceutical products are as follows:

- The Organic Law against Illicit Traffic and Consumption of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances (promulgated on December 16, 2005);
- Resolution in the Official Gazette No. 37.405 from the Ministry of Health and Social Development (promulgated on March 15, 2002);
- Organic Law on Health (promulgated on November 11, 1998);
- Medications Law (promulgated on August 3, 2000);
- Law on Pharmaceutical Practice and its Regulations (promulgated on May 21, 1998).

The Ministry of Health and Social Development, through its Health Regulation Administration and the Regional Health Departments, is responsible for coordinating the control of pharmaceutical products. Venezuela reports that it controls all the pharmaceutical products containing active substances listed in international conventions.

In connection with the commercial sector, Venezuela conducts pharmaceutical product control activities: import/export control, license control, monitoring distribution, inspection, administrative sanctions, registry of licensees, and registry of the quantities of pharmaceutical products sold. Similarly, the following health sector areas are included in the mechanism to control pharmaceutical products: license controls, monitoring distribution, monitoring prescriptions, inspection, administrative sanctions, and transfer of unusual cases to judicial authorities.

The country has a system to compile information on administrative and regulatory activities and sanctions imposed in connection with them. The country provides the following data:

**Regulatory Activities in Venezuela**

Regulatory Activities	2004	2005	2006
Number of licenses issued to:			
Importers	19	28	15
Exporters	19	28	15
Manufacturers	01	—	—
Distributors	58	86	44
Pharmacies	309	340	216
Number of permits issued for:			
Import	686	740	544
Export	158	25	35
Other	—	346	147
Number of inspections conducted:			
Manufacturers	—	27	21
Pharmacies	—	—	20

Venezuela provides training courses for public and private sector personnel involved in the handling of pharmaceutical products, which are adequate to meet the country's training demands.

Venezuela has an automated information management system to facilitate the control of pharmaceutical products. There are databases on imports, exports, allotments needed, preparation of pharmaceutical products, purchases and sales, monthly reports of psychotropic and narcotic substances, and customs inspection.

Venezuela has laws and regulations allowing the application of penal and administrative sanctions for the diversion of pharmaceutical products. During 2006, six administrative sanctions were imposed.

The country provided no information on the number of sanctions imposed over the 2004–2006 period. The country does not provide information on seizures involving pharmaceutical products during the years 2004–2006.

The country reports that it has detected the sale of drugs or the distribution of pharmaceuticals over the Internet, but states that the functions and responsibilities of administrative offices and police agencies involved in the prevention and control of such sales have not been clearly defined.

The country has conducted activities or programs to increase awareness regarding the illicit sale of pharmaceutical products and other drugs over the Internet among administrative, judicial, law enforcement, postal, customs and other authorities.

CICAD notes that the country does not have regulations or a mechanism to prevent and control the illicit trafficking of pharmaceutical products and other drugs over the Internet. However, the country reports that it has conducted activities or programs to increase awareness of the illicit sale of these substances over the Internet.



CICAD recognizes Venezuela's efforts in enacting the Organic Law against Illicit Traffic and Consumption of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances in 2005, establishing regulations to control pharmaceutical products. However, CICAD observes that the country does not have a system to register seizures, nor a system allowing it to determine the number of penal and administrative sanctions imposed for the diversion of pharmaceutical products.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

7. **IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM FOR RECORDING SEIZURES OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS.**
8. **IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF PENAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS IMPOSED FOR THE DIVERSION OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS.**

C. Control of Chemical Substances

Venezuela has legislation for the control of chemical substances: the Organic Law against Illicit Traffic and Consumption of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances (2005) and the Organic Law against Organized Crime (2005).

The country has laws and/or regulations providing for the imposition of penal and administrative sanctions for the diversion of controlled chemical substances in accordance with international conventions, but does not provide the number of times such sanctions were imposed. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Production and Trade are the agencies that impose administrative sanctions.

Venezuela states that it exports and imports controlled chemical substances and that in-transit customs operations are banned by law.

The country has a mechanism to monitor and prevent the diversion of controlled chemical substances, applicable to all the chemical substances listed in the international conventions. However, the country reports that it has not implemented a computerized system to control these activities.

The Unified Registry of Chemical Substance Operators is, by law, the agency responsible for issuing and receiving pre-export notifications. However, this registry is not currently in operation and the National Anti-drug Office (ONA) currently handles such notifications.

The country issued 12 pre-export notifications in 2004, 35 in 2005, and 155 in 2006. It received four pre-export notifications from other countries in 2004, 35 in 2005, and 94 in 2006. Timely responses were sent to all of them.

The quantities of controlled chemical substances seized during the years 2004–2006 are shown in the following table:

**Seizures of Controlled Chemical Substances, 2004–2006**

Controlled Chemical Substances	Unit of Measure	Quantities seized		
		2004	2005	2006
Potassium permanganate	Kilograms	10,000.00	—	1,997.00
Urea	Kilograms	663,580.00	84,550.00	30,304.00
Thinner	Liters	160.00	132,468.00	—
Sulfuric acid	Liters	64,724.00	6,864.00	15,000.00
Hydrochloric acid	Liters	16.65	6,000.00	—
Calcium hypochlorite	Kilograms	—	1,338.00	—
Acetone	Liters	—	520.00	3,200.00
Bicarbonate of soda	Liters	—	456.00	—
Sodium carbonate	Kilograms	14,356.00	—	249,930.00
bicarbonate of soda	Kilograms	1,920.120	—	—

CICAD recognizes Venezuela's efforts to implement rules and mechanisms for the control of scheduled chemicals, despite the fact that the Unified Registry of Chemical Substance Operators is not fully operational.

CICAD notes that the country has not implemented an automated system to control the diversion of chemical substances, nor has it implemented a system to determine the number of criminal and administrative sanctions imposed for the diversion of these substances.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

9. TAKE THE STEPS NECESSARY TO MAKE THE UNIFIED REGISTRY FULLY OPERATIONAL WITH AN AUTOMATED SYSTEM TO CONTROL THE DIVERSION OF CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES.
10. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF PENAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS IMPOSED FOR THE DIVERSION OF CONTROLLED CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES.

IV. CONTROL MEASURES**A. Illicit Drug Trafficking**

The number of seizures and quantities of illicit drugs seized between 2004 and 2006 are shown in the following table:


Number of Seizures and Quantities of Illicit Drugs Seized

	Number of Seizures			Unit of Measure	Quantities of Drugs Seized		
	2004	2005	2006		2004	2005	2006
Poppy plants	—	2	—	Kilograms	—	154	—
Heroin	129	66	20	Kilograms	658.00	394.26	270.97
Cocaine	939	1,010	761	Kilograms	31,222.10	58,435.84	38,925.98
Crack	130	114	22	Kilograms	16.12	347.78	119.40
Basuco (residues or impurities)	86	49	13	Kilograms	38.83	68.34	34.73
Cannabis plants	—	1	—	Kilograms	—	425	—
Cannabis (grass)	275	233	93	Kilograms	11,310.53	18,279.73	21,302
Amphetamine/methamphetamine	—	—	1	Kilograms	—	—	930
MDMA (Ecstasy) and derivatives	4	5	3	Kilograms	639	79,260	7,616
Clonazepam	—	—	—	Kilograms	—	20	—

Venezuela presented no information on the number of public officials charged with or convicted of acts of corruption or other offenses related to illicit drug trafficking.

The country reports 496 individuals formally charged with illicit drug trafficking in 2005, and 1,773 cases in 2006. The number of people convicted of illicit drug trafficking reported by the country was 124 in 2005 and 271 in 2006.

The country reports that 276 people were charged with illicit possession of drugs in 2005, and 819 people in 2006. Similarly, 16 people were convicted of that crime in 2005, and 46 in 2006.

Information exchange at the international level is carried out through the Information and Joint Coordination Center (CICC), which participates in anti-drug networks and allows for reciprocal exchange between the CICC and the Drug Information Centers (DIC) of the network member countries and the National Drug Information System.

Venezuela submits the following data regarding judicial cooperation in the area of illicit drug trafficking:

Judicial Cooperation Requests Made and Received

	Judicial Cooperation Requests Made		Judicial Cooperation Requests Received	
	Number of requests	Number of replies granting the request	Number of requests	Number of replies granting the request
2004	3	0	32	5
2005	13	0	39	22
2006	26	2	30	15



The central authority responsible for making extradition requests is the General Consular Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During the 2005–2006 period, the country sent four extradition requests in illicit drug trafficking cases; two extradition requests were granted.

The country reports that the extradition of nationals for illicit drug trafficking cases is not permitted under its legal system, and that there are no exceptions for cases of illicit drug trafficking or other transnational crimes. The Office of the Attorney General, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior and Justice and the Supreme Court of Justice are the authorities responsible for receiving extradition requests.

With regard to extradition requests in illicit drug trafficking cases, the country reports that it received six extradition requests in 2004, two in 2005, and one in 2006; it granted one such request in 2004 and one in 2005.

Venezuela has conducted specialized training courses or information sessions on the subject of combating illicit drug trafficking for security, law enforcement, and customs officials, prosecutors and judicial branch employees during 2004–2006. The country reports that these efforts satisfy its training needs.

CICAD recognizes Venezuela’s efforts to improve the coordination mechanisms among the institutions responsible for the fight against illicit drug trafficking, and the development of specialized training on illicit drug trafficking for security, police, customs and justice officials. Nevertheless, CICAD notes that the requests for judicial cooperation received from other countries were not fully addressed.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 11. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS FORMALLY CHARGED WITH AND CONVICTED OF ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING OR ACTS OF CORRUPTION RELATED TO ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING.**

B. Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials

In Venezuela, the Arms Department of the National Armed Forces (DARFA) is the entity responsible for everything related to control of firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials. It is responsible for granting licenses and import, export and transshipment permits; for canceling licenses and permits; and for confiscation or seizure of illicitly trafficked firearms or ammunitions.

The country has various provisions that define illicit trafficking and manufacture of firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials.

Venezuela provided no information on the number of persons charged with and convicted of possession of and illicit trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives and related materials during the years 2004–2006.

Venezuela has laws and regulations establishing administrative controls for import, export, and transshipment of firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials:



- The Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, December 1999, Article 324;
- The Disarmament Law, Article 6(1);
- The Organic Law against Organized Crime), October 25, 2005, Article 11;
- Law on Partial Reform of the Penal Code, April 13, 2005, Articles 272 to 282 and Articles 509 to 516;
- Customs Duty Decree, Official Gazette No. 5.774 dated June 28, 2005.

The country has an Automated Firearms System (RENA), which includes the registry and control of firearms.

The Law on Weapons and Explosives and the Joint Resolution of the Ministry of Defense and Interior and Justice are the national provisions in effect that require the issuing of import or in-transit licenses or permits before authorizing the entry of shipments of firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials.

Venezuela provided no information on the quantities of firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials seized, or on the quantities seized in relation to the number of arrests in cases of illicit drug trafficking during the years 2004, 2005 and 2006.

The country reports that it has a database that serves as a national system of records on import and export, but not transshipment, of firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials. Venezuela maintains these records manually and with computers for a period of 10 years.

CICAD notes that the country has legal and institutional mechanisms for controlling firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials. Nevertheless, the country has no records of seizures of firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials made in connection with drug trafficking cases.

CICAD notes that the country does not have information systems on the number of persons arrested and tried for and convicted of offenses connected with trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

12. IMPLEMENT A STATISTICAL SYSTEM TO PROVIDE TIMELY INFORMATION ON NUMBERS OF PERSONS ARRESTED AND TRIED FOR AND CONVICTED OF OFFENSES CONNECTED WITH TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES, A REITERATED RECOMMENDATION FROM THE THIRD EVALUATION ROUND, 2003–2004.
13. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO RECORD QUANTITIES OF FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, EXPLOSIVES, AND RELATED MATERIALS SEIZED IN CASES OF ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN THESE MATERIALS.

C. Money Laundering

Venezuela reports that the Organic Law against Organized Crime, (LOCD) enacted in October 2005, recognizes money laundering as an autonomous offense, separate from any other illicit activity.

The country has rules that require financial institutions and other obligated entities to report suspicious or unusual transactions to the competent authorities. However, Venezuela's rules do not apply to



real estate brokers, lawyers, notaries, or accountants, or to cross-border movements of money, in cash or securities.

The Anti-money Laundering Department of the National Anti-drug Office coordinates the strategy to implement mechanisms for the prevention, investigation and control of money laundering activities (in connection with illicit drug trafficking) in the following sectors: tourism, construction, casinos and bingo halls, cooperatives, currency remittance businesses and professional groups. This strategy extends from the establishment of resolutions and/or provisions to the creation of anti-money laundering units in each of these sectors.

The country did not provide information on the number of persons formally charged with and convicted of money laundering during the years 2004–2006.

The country has a National Financial Intelligence Unit (UNIF), which is a member of the Egmont Group, is attached to the Superintendency of Banks, and has budgetary autonomy. It may consult bank accounts directly and in doing so cannot be challenged on the basis of any confidentiality rule.

The UNIF's function is to request, receive, analyze, archive and transmit, to the appropriate criminal police authorities and to the public prosecution service, whatever financial information they may require to conduct their investigations, as well as to draw up reports of suspicious transactions related to presumed money laundering, funding of terrorism, and other financial crimes that obligated subjects and all other financial institutions and companies regulated by special laws must submit. The country reports that the budget of the National Financial Intelligence Unit was US\$ 633,362 in 2004, US\$1,343,242 in 2005, and US\$1,743,577 in 2006.

The country provides information on the number of suspicious transaction reports received and investigated during the period 2004–2006, shown in the table below:

Number of Suspicious Transaction Reports Received and Analyzed

Year	Number of STRs Received	FORWARDED TO PUBLIC MINISTRY	
		Forwarded to Department on Drugs	Forwarded to Prosecutor's Office
2004	584	339	—
2005	612	123	159
2006	1,041	127	214
Total	2,237	589	373

The country has mechanisms for obtaining documents and records in money laundering cases for purposes of intelligence and prosecution. Article 51 of the Organic Law against Organized Crime states that banking secrecy, confidentiality rules in business transactions, privacy or intimacy rules cannot be invoked by obligated subjects described in the law with the intent or objective to evade civil or criminal responsibilities.

In Venezuela, the law regulating assets used in the commission of a drug trafficking offense, as well as those assets suspected of originating from illicit activities, under the terms of the Organic Law against Illicit Trafficking and Consumption of Psychotropic Substances, are subject to preventive freezing. After a ruling has been made, these materials will be confiscated and turned over to the



responsible entity (the National Anti-drug Office), which will dispose of them, distributing these resources among its programs and to other public institutions dedicated to repressing, preventing and regulating those crimes governed by the aforementioned law.

The country does not provide information on extradition requests sent and received in money laundering cases, based on international agreements, because the information is not computerized.

CICAD notes that Venezuela recently strengthened the regulatory and institutional framework for the prevention and control of money laundering, although it must still expand the administrative controls to cover lawyers, notaries, and accountants. At the same time, CICAD encourages the country to establish registers of persons formally charged with money laundering, and on the value of the assets seized in cases of that kind.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

14. EXTEND THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS TO COVER LAWYERS, NOTARIES, AND ACCOUNTANTS.
15. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS FORMALLY CHARGED WITH OR CONVICTED OF MONEY LAUNDERING.
16. CREATE A DATABASE TO RECORD THE VALUE OF THE ASSETS SEIZED IN MONEY LAUNDERING CASES.
17. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO RECORD EXTRADITION REQUESTS SENT AND RECEIVED IN MONEY LAUNDERING CASES.



CONCLUSIONS

CICAD recognizes Venezuela's efforts in implementing the 2002–2007 National Anti-drug Plan, and encourages the country to seek alternative funding to ensure the execution of the Plan's activities in the various areas.

CICAD notes that the country has not ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption and has not acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, nor the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components, and Ammunition, a recommendation reiterated from the Second Evaluation Round, 2001–2002.

CICAD acknowledges the country's efforts in completing studies to assess the extent of drug use; however, CICAD encourages the country to conduct a more thorough quantitative and qualitative analysis of the results obtained.

CICAD values the country's effort to implement prevention programs for different target populations and to develop training courses; however, CICAD observes that many of the programs demonstrate a reduced level of coverage. In the treatment area, CICAD recognizes the country's efforts in establishing a variety of drug abuse treatment services. CICAD notes that Venezuela has not made progress in conducting studies of prevalence and incidence in the general population.

CICAD notes with concern that the country does not have a system to estimate the extent of illicit crop cultivation and that it did not continue its previous eradication activities in 2006.

With reference to the control of pharmaceutical products, CICAD recognizes the country's efforts in enacting the Organic Law against Illicit Traffic and Consumption of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances in 2005, establishing regulations to control pharmaceutical products. However, CICAD observes that the country does not have a system to register seizures of pharmaceutical products.

CICAD notes that the country has a legal framework to regulate the control of chemical substances. However, CICAD notes that the country has not implemented an automated system to facilitate the control of the diversion of chemical substances.

CICAD recognizes the country's efforts to improve the coordination mechanisms among the institutions responsible for the fight against illicit drug trafficking, and the development of specialized training on illicit drug trafficking for security, police, customs and justice officials. On the other hand, CICAD notes that the requests for judicial cooperation received from other countries were not fully addressed. In addition, the country does not have information on the number of public officials formally charged with and convicted of illicit drug trafficking or acts of corruption related to illicit drug trafficking.

CICAD notes that the country has legal and institutional mechanisms for the control of firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials. Nevertheless, the country does not have records on seizures or a database recording the number of individuals arrested for, charged with, and convicted of trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives, and other related materials.

Finally, CICAD notes that the country has a regulatory and institutional framework for the prevention and control of money laundering, although it must still expand the administrative controls to cover lawyers, notaries, and accountants. In addition, CICAD encourages the country to establish registers of individuals formally charged with or convicted of money laundering and of the value of assets seized in cases of that kind.

CICAD acknowledges the progress made by Venezuela and its participation in the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) process. CICAD encourages the country to continue with actions aimed at achieving full compliance with the recommendations made.



SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are assigned to Venezuela in order to assist the country in strengthening its policy to combat the problem of drugs and related activities and increase multilateral cooperation in the Hemisphere:

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

1. ACCEDE TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA, 1982.
2. RATIFY THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION, 2003.
3. RATIFY THE PROTOCOL AGAINST THE ILLICIT MANUFACTURING OF AND TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS, THEIR PARTS AND COMPONENTS, AND AMMUNITION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME, A RECOMMENDATION REITERATED FROM THE SECOND EVALUATION ROUND, 2001–2002.

DEMAND REDUCTION

4. INCREASE THE COVERAGE OF DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS FOR THE STUDENT POPULATION.
5. CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE MAGNITUDE OF DRUG USE IN THE GENERAL POPULATION.

SUPPLY REDUCTION

6. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO DETECT AND QUANTIFY THE AREA OF ILLICIT CROPS.
7. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM FOR RECORDING SEIZURES OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS.
8. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF PENAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS IMPOSED FOR THE DIVERSION OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS.
9. TAKE THE STEPS NECESSARY TO MAKE THE UNIFIED REGISTRY FULLY OPERATIONAL WITH AN AUTOMATED SYSTEM TO CONTROL THE DIVERSION OF CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES.
10. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF PENAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS IMPOSED FOR THE DIVERSION OF CONTROLLED CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES.

CONTROL MEASURES

11. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS FORMALLY CHARGED WITH AND CONVICTED OF ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING OR ACTS OF CORRUPTION RELATED TO ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING.
12. IMPLEMENT A STATISTICAL SYSTEM TO PROVIDE TIMELY INFORMATION ON NUMBERS OF PERSONS ARRESTED AND TRIED FOR AND CONVICTED OF OFFENSES CONNECTED WITH TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES, A REITERATED RECOMMENDATION FROM THE THIRD EVALUATION ROUND, 2003–2004.



13. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO RECORD QUANTITIES OF FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, EXPLOSIVES, AND RELATED MATERIALS SEIZED IN CASES OF ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN THESE MATERIALS.
14. EXTEND THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS TO COVER LAWYERS, NOTARIES AND ACCOUNTANTS.
15. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS FORMALLY CHARGED WITH OR CONVICTED OF MONEY LAUNDERING.
16. CREATE A DATABASE TO RECORD THE VALUE OF THE ASSETS SEIZED IN MONEY LAUNDERING CASES.
17. IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM TO RECORD EXTRADITION REQUESTS SENT AND RECEIVED IN MONEY LAUNDERING CASES.



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