



I. INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING / NATIONAL ANTI-DRUG STRATEGY

Belize reports that its National Anti-Drug Strategy was approved by the Head of State on February 2, 2002. The Strategy, which will expire in 2004, includes the areas of demand reduction, supply reduction, control measures, institutional framework, and program evaluation. The approved budget is provided from domestic resources and a total of US\$ 121,437 is allocated for demand reduction and US\$2,425,923 for supply reduction.

Implementation of the Strategy is coordinated by the National Drug Abuse Control Council (NDACC) which operates at the national level. Established in 1988 by the Drugs Act of Belize, this is an autonomous agency and the central mechanism of authority for execution of the national plan. It coordinates: demand reduction, supply reduction, control measures, drug information and statistics, planning of national anti-drug plan activities, evaluation of institutional efforts and coordination of international assistance.

The NDACC has its own separate budget, which is evaluated by the Ministry of Health. Its resources derive mainly from governmental budgetary allocation and from international assistance. The private sector does not participate, nor are other sources of funding identified. The NDACC's actual budget for the 2000/2001 fiscal period is US\$ 463,444 which represents a shortfall of 22.75%, with respect to the proposed budget of US\$ 600,000. Participation by national and international public and private sectors is important in achieving the goals established in the Plan.

In combating the drug phenomenon, Belize has moved forward in the legislative area in that, in 2001, it ratified the United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971, the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, and the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption, ratified this year, in August 2002; however, ratification is still pending of the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters which was recommended during the First Evaluation Round 1999-2000 of the MEM; according to the country, it has been presented to the Government Cabinet for ratification. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three Protocols have not been signed.

The country has a central office, coordinated by the NDACC, to organize, compile, and coordinate drug-related data and information. The Inter-American Drug Use Data System (SIDUC) is currently used. However, the Uniform Statistical System on Control of the Supply Area (CICDAT) is not. Belize states that it would welcome any assistance or training from CICAD/OAS to improve its current data system. The Police Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center (JICC) compiles and disseminates data on control of supply. Likewise, the country reports that data are presented to the International Narcotics Control Board, but not to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP).

Compilation of information is hampered by the population's unwillingness and apprehension about providing accurate information in this area. It is important to make the population aware, in its own interest, of the need for accurate information by improving the method of approaching the community.

Belize has the support of different public and private sector institutions for the distribution of drug-related information (libraries, schools, universities, research institutions), which is carried out via national publications, the press/media, e-mail or fax services targeting particular groups, NDACC publications and reports, other government agencies, organizations, and affiliated entities. The NDACC research and information desk reports that some 800-1,000 individuals visit the office each year, and that information is provided to approximately 40,000 persons.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **REITERATE THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE FIRST EVALUATION ROUND 1999-2000 TO RATIFY THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION ON MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS.**
2. **SIGN AND RATIFY THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME AND ITS THREE PROTOCOLS.**

II. DEMAND REDUCTION

Belize's National Anti-Drug Strategy 1999-2004 covers the prevention, treatment, social reintegration, aftercare, research, and training areas. As recommended in the First Evaluation Round 1999-2000, the Strategy includes the UN Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction and the UN Action Plan. Participating in its implementation are: the National Drug Abuse Control Council, the Judiciary, Law Enforcement, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance. Currently, only one NGO, known as REMAR, participates in the treatment and rehabilitation area. There must be participation by more NGO's and by other sectors of the population to achieve broader coverage in this area.

Belize has implemented its national prevention program system to include both: (a) target populations, among these: primary, secondary and tertiary education students, informal community programs for young people and adults, working children, women, prisoners and alcoholics; and (b) prevention practitioners such as teachers, community leaders, youth leaders, parents, social workers, health workers, prison officers and the media. Currently, a "Prevention in the Workplace Program" is being developed which, according to the country, is still in the draft stage. The data presented show that the national drug abuse prevention system targeting key sectors of the population, such as indigenous groups and street children, and evaluation of such programs, is still in the process of implementation and consolidation. It is important for implementation of such programs to be stepped up and, in particular, to penetrate those sectors not receiving any attention.

Belize does not have specialized professional training at university level on prevention and treatment of, and research into, drug abuse. Neither has it conducted research into prevention criteria to evaluate prevention program effectiveness and impact; however, it reports that the University of Belize has undertaken research and the establishment of faculty training in conjunction with international entities and other countries. It also reports that this institution is reviewing study programs to incorporate courses to train professionals so that they can collaborate in drug abuse prevention, treatment and research.

Although no legislation has been adopted on standards of care in drug abuse treatment, the NDACC visits treatment facilities to ensure patient welfare. The country currently has one private center and three self-help groups (AA), thus reflecting the scant coverage with respect to national services. The one private center does not keep documentation on numbers of persons seeking treatment. There is an evident need to correct this lack of data in the short term. The closure of one of the centers in 2001 created tremendous stress on the capacity to provide treatment, which indicates the need to strengthen this area. One of the greatest problems is that owing to a lack of technical expertise, there is no structured or formal evaluation of treatment and rehabilitation programs. The country clearly conveys its concern over the lack of trained professionals.

Belize has never conducted a population survey, although there are plans to conduct a national household survey in the near future. The country informs that the age of first use is 11.3 years for



solvents and inhalants, 12.5 for alcohol, 12.7 for tobacco, and 14.2 for marijuana. The average age of first use of tranquilizers is 13.9 and, for stimulants, 14.5. With regard to estimates of the number or percentage of secondary school students who perceive drug consumption as harmful to their health and welfare, Belize states that research has not shown any change over time in the perceived risk of drug use.

The country reports recent changes in types of drug abuse, such as the appearance of new drugs, GHB and Rohypnol in 1999/2000, heroin in 2001, and ecstasy in 2002. The information provided is insufficient to be able to assess the social impact that the use of new drugs is causing. Nonetheless, Belize informs that a secondary school survey conducted in mid-February 2002 is currently being analyzed. It is hoped that once the study is finished, NDACC will be in a better position to provide an assessment of the social impact of the use of new drugs.

No estimates are provided on numbers of deaths or morbidity associated with drug use. It is important that the responsible authorities have such data available in designing demand reduction health policies to facilitate effective decision-making in the fight against drugs.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. CONDUCT A NATIONAL SURVEY ON THE GENERAL POPULATION IN ORDER TO FORMULATE CLEAR DRUG PREVENTION POLICIES AND STRATEGIES.**

III. SUPPLY REDUCTION

A. Drug Production and Alternative Development

The Police Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center (JICC) reports that 84,239 marijuana plants were destroyed in 2000, another 70,607 plants in 2001, and 31,064 as of August 2002. It also reports that data on Belize's potential production of raw material and drugs, in view of current detection methods, only relates to small crops of marijuana, which is only for domestic use. The area planted with illicit crops in 2001 was 941.43 acres; regarding potential capacity, this represented 70,607 marijuana plants.

No eradication has taken place, nor has abandonment been observed. The JICC also reports that there have been no seizures of indoor crops. Currently, there are no alternative development programs.

B. Supply Reduction and Control of Pharmaceutical Products and Chemical Substances

Belize reports that, in 2001, a methamphetamine laboratory used as raw material for drug production was discovered and destroyed. The Pharmacy Department of the Ministry of Health is the entity with responsibility for controlling and preventing the diversion of pharmaceuticals. All substances listed in the international conventions are subject to control. Effectiveness has been evaluated via site inspections of premises and records, which have been made by the inspection division for less than a year. Thus, this does not constitute a formal mechanism. Despite efforts made, the Government acknowledges that regulatory gaps remain, and that there is a need for a legislative mechanism that fully authorizes inspection.

The country reports that the exchange of operational information and collaboration among national authorities responsible for control of pharmaceuticals is ineffective. There is an entity with



responsibility for information exchange and collaboration with regulatory agencies on the control of pharmaceuticals. However, the country indicates a lack of human resources, adequate regulation, and ready access to the Internet for the purpose of establishing and maintaining communication. Among achievements are the creation of an inspection system and the establishment of contacts to develop control mechanisms within the country and abroad. The Grid Alliance Committee has also established a network for information exchange at hemispheric level. This Committee has CICAD support. Implementation of this network will facilitate the exchange of operational information. Meanwhile, contacts are being developed that may strengthen information exchange and collaboration.

Regarding controlled chemical substances, there are no mechanisms to control and prevent their diversion. Implementation remains pending of the CICAD recommendation from the First Evaluation Round 1999-2000 to establish legislation to regulate controlled chemical substances. The Ministry of Health is conducting a study on the adoption of laws and regulations for the a database and the corresponding control. Belize reports that, although it does not have exchange of operational information and collaboration among authorities with responsibility for the control of controlled chemical substances, information may be obtained as required.

The country has methods for the disposal of pharmaceuticals and controlled chemical substances, such as: dilution, dissolving, incineration, and neutralization. Seized pharmaceuticals and/or controlled chemical substances not disposed of are kept in custody until the penal, civil, or administrative sanctions have been effectively imposed. Destruction is witnessed by technicians from various entities, such as: the Forensic Unit, Police, Customs, etc. Belize reports a need for closer ties between the Police, Forensic services, and the Ministry of Health to share and have access to information. The Grid Alliance's subcommittee and the National Observatory on Drugs are also involved in efforts in this area.

Belize implements the prior notification mechanism for controlled chemical substances and does not report having sent any pre-export notifications. The country informs that it imports all pharmaceuticals to be used in its territory, and does not authorize re-export.

With respect to controlled chemical substances, 2 prior notifications were received in 2000, and 13 in 2001. Use of pre-export notifications of controlled chemical substances has made it easier to ascertain true quantities vis-à-vis those authorized. Although there is evidence of some progress, it is essential to implement the recommendation made and adopt adequate legislation to monitor controlled chemical substances in all areas.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. REITERATE THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE FIRST EVALUATION ROUND 1999-2000 TO ADOPT LEGISLATION TO REGULATE CONTROLLED CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES.**

IV. CONTROL MEASURES

A. Illicit Drug Trafficking

The country reports that it seized a higher quantity of heroin, cocaine HCL, and crack in 2000-2001. On the other hand, seizures of cannabis plants and seed have decreased, which relates to the minimal production of marijuana in the country.



Type of Drug	Quantity of drug seized	
	2000	2001
Heroin	352.1 gm	3kg 399gm
Cocaine Hydrochloride	11kg 232.8gm	3,851kg 646gm
Crack Cocaine	2kg 437.9gm	3kg 235.83gm
Cannabis plants	162,975	71,857
Cannabis Seed	25kg 602.7gm	8kg 134gm

Among new trends in trafficking and routes, illicit laboratories, and chemical substances seized, is the identification of vehicles transporting ecstasy from Costa Rica to Belize. In late 2001, a clandestine methamphetamine laboratory was discovered in Corozal village, in the border area with Mexico. Over 42 substances used to produce methamphetamines were discovered. Analysis of such trends suggests the importance of strengthening border controls and information exchange, in particular with countries of Central America, as this is considered a bridge for drug trafficking from South America towards North America or Europe.

The country informs of a drop in numbers of arrests in connection with illicit drug trafficking during the years 2000 (512 persons) and 2001 (429), as well as for illicit drug possession during the years 2000 (1,690 persons) and 2001 (1,485 persons).

Under Belize law, when a person is arrested for drug possession, the person is charged. The country reports that 60% of people arrested were convicted, 10% were found innocent, and 30% are awaiting trial.

Timely exchange of operational information and collaboration among authorities with responsibility for the control of illicit drug trafficking is facilitated by an interagency committee, joint forces/operations, and ongoing training. The Police Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center, JICC, is the mechanism to evaluate the efficiency of timely exchange of operational information and collaboration among authorities responsible for control of illicit drug trafficking; it was established in 1989 and works 24 hours a day. The Semi-Autonomous Branch of the Police Department and the Branch Head of National Crimes Investigation monitor and routinely evaluate effectiveness.

Belize has not made requests for judicial cooperation in connection with illicit drug trafficking. It received 2 requests from the United States and Mexico, which were processed by the authorities. The request presented by the United States was rejected, while the Mexican was expelled from the country in August 2002, and currently is being prosecuted in the United States. No requests for extradition have been made to other states. The Government of Belize received two extradition requests from the United States, which were granted. To date the country has extradition treaties with the United States and Great Britain.

Belize indicates that effective criminal provisions are in place to sanction corruption, and that they cover all areas indicated in the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. No government officials have been convicted of corruption-related offenses in connection with illicit drug trafficking. Neither does the country report convictions of government officials for illicit-drug trafficking related offenses.

B. Firearms and Ammunition

The country has several entities with responsibility for controlling movements of firearms and ammunition, and for preventing their diversion. Among them are: the Belize Police Department and the Ministry



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of Home Affairs. To promote or facilitate information exchange and collaboration among all entities, different mechanisms are in place, such as: an interagency committee, joint forces/operations, and interagency information and/or communication systems/networks. No formal mechanism yet exists to evaluate the effectiveness of such entities. Belize has adopted the CICAD Model Regulations for the Control of the International Movement of Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition.

The Firearms Act and the Firearms Control Regulation Act No. 23 of 2000, establish the legal and regulatory provisions defining the offenses of illicit trafficking in firearms and ammunition, and the sanctions for noncompliance. The penalty for prohibited firearms is a jail sentence; sanctions for illicit firearms-related offenses range from fines of US\$1,000 upward and/or imprisonment. The country reports that 199 persons were arrested in 2000 and 209 in 2001 in connection with firearms and ammunition-related offenses. All of those arrested were prosecuted. Belize does not provide information on numbers of convictions. It further reports that there have been no arrests for trafficking in firearms; however, firearms that have entered the country illegally are on the streets. There have been arrests for possession of prohibited weapons.

The law establishes administrative controls to prevent the diversion of firearms and ammunition and contains regulations on importation, exportation, and transit. There is also legislation requiring importing or transit countries to provide the necessary licenses or permits before authorizing embarkations of shipments of firearms or ammunition. The country has no available information on embarkations and quantities of firearms. Thus far, there have been no seizures of firearms or ammunition. However, the law establishes mechanisms to prevent seized firearms from returning to the illicit market, such as destruction, donation, or sale to government agencies.

Belize has a database containing records of dates, description, and series or lot number of imported, exported, or in-transit firearms and ammunition. Estimates are not provided on length of time records are officially kept. Computerization of records is currently under way. The Belize Police Department, through the Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center, is the entity with responsibility for information exchange and collaboration among countries regarding control of firearms and ammunition. Information is shared regarding tactical intelligence, movements of suspicious persons, and identification of firearms and ammunition. Among cooperation mechanisms available for such purposes are an interagency committee, joint forces/operations, and international information and communication networks/systems.

Belize does not have data regarding numbers of requests for information to other states regarding shipments of firearms and ammunition, and replies sent by Belize, and the reverse situation, made under international agreements.

C. Money Laundering

Section 3 of the Money Laundering provisional Act, Chapter 104 of the Laws of Belize R.E. 2000 contains provisions defining the offense of money laundering. On conviction, a fine may be imposed of not less than US\$ 12,500 but which may be as much as US\$ 50,000, or imprisonment for a term not less than three years, but which may extend to six years, or both fine and imprisonment. Predicate offenses defined are: illicit trafficking in drugs and firearms, kidnapping, extortion, terrorism, fraud, and others. Belize indicates that the following are not defined as predicate offenses: trafficking in human beings, organ trafficking, prostitution, pornography, and corruption. Under the law, in cases where the predicate offense is committed in a country other than Belize, as the case enters Belize, a money laundering charge shall be brought against any person. The law provides for an immediate charge for anyone accused of money laundering or any other related predicate offense.

The Money Laundering Act regulates activities by banks, "offshore" banks, currency exchanges,



insurance companies, real estate brokerages, attorneys, accountants, and cross-border movements of currency and negotiable bearer instruments. Sanctions under the anti-money laundering legislation depend on the violation, but are usually in the form of fines and imprisonment.

The financial intelligence/analysis/investigation unit that receives, requests, investigates, analyzes, and reports to the competent authorities information on transactions that may constitute money-laundering, functions within The Central Bank of Belize. The unit, which is autonomous, comprises six persons and has a separate budget. It shares information with other states and counterpart foreign entities. It fulfills the functions of a financial intelligence unit and is not affiliated with any international organization.

With respect to investigation, of the 18 cases reported in 2000, 12 in 2001, and 2 in 2002, three joint investigations were conducted relating to nine of the suspicious transactions reported. Criminal charges were not brought in Belize, but charges were brought in other countries in connection with two of the three investigations mentioned. Proceedings are not yet concluded. Assets have not been forfeited under Belize's jurisdiction. The country reports that no sanctions have been imposed on financial entities and others for failure to report suspicious transactions or for failure to comply with money laundering control provisions. The amendment to the Money Laundering Act of 2002 requires financial and other responsible institutions to establish the following mandatory control measures: client registry, transaction registry, existence of an enforcement official, existence of independent audits.

The country has control measures in place for financial institutions and others to report suspicious or unusual transactions. Among such measures are: reporting of large transactions, verification of client identity, preservation of records, and "know-your-client" policies.

The country states that while the legislation in force in Belize stipulated the provision of documents and financial records, it only applied to countries with which Belize had bilateral or multilateral mutual assistance agreements, until the Act was amended in 2002. Recently, Act No. 5 of 2000, published in the Official Gazette on March 2, 2002, amended the Money Laundering Act with provisions to combat terrorism and to facilitate international cooperation in investigation and prosecution thereof.

Belize reports that no property has been forfeited in the country, although there is currently a restraining order for US\$78,808 in properties in regards to a drug trafficking arrest. Belize does not yet have an entity or entities to administer and/or dispose of assets seized and forfeited in connection with illicit drug trafficking and money laundering-related offenses. Neither there is a fund to administer confiscated assets. It is essential to create an entity of this type.

Although the Anti-Money Laundering Unit of the Belize Police Department was created in March 2001, and no arrests or charges have been made, or prosecutions brought in connection with money laundering, effective assistance was provided in connection with one request. With respect to numbers of financial disclosures/reports/cases analyzed/investigated by the Unit, Belize reports 18 in 2000, 12 in 2001, and 2 in 2002. No criminal charges have been made under Belize's legislation. The country does not report extradition made in connection with money laundering cases. Pursuant to the Money Laundering Act amended in 2002, Belize can direct the sharing and exchange of information or conduct joint investigations with other countries without the need to enter into additional Agreements or Treaties. In 2002, it received one request for extradition from the United States. In 2001, the United States made a request for freezing of assets, documentation and financial records. The request was not granted as the United States has not yet signed or ratified the bilateral agreement between the two countries.

In addition, in 2002, Belize sent a request to Mexico for the freezing of assets. Although Belize and Mexico have not entered into an international agreement to address money laundering, the



request was nonetheless made, with the possibility of exploring other avenues for such assistance. Although there is no bilateral agreement between the two countries, in 2002 Belize made a request to Mexico for the lifting of bank secrecy.

In 2001, officials of the Caribbean Anti-Money Laundering Program Unit (CALP) conducted a seminar to sensitize law enforcement and legal personnel to administer money-laundering cases. CALP is an arm of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF), which has responsibility for providing services to address money laundering in the Caribbean region. The country informs that in 2000, four officials were giving training on dealing with money laundering, and four in 2001. All these officials continue to perform the same functions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. IMPLEMENT FULLY THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION AGAINST THE ILLICIT MANUFACTURING OF AND TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, EXPLOSIVES AND OTHER RELATED MATERIALS (CIFTA), IN PARTICULAR STRENGTHENING INFORMATION AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS IN THE AREA OF ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION.**
- 2. CREATE AN ENTITY/ENTITIES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION AND/OR DISPOSAL OF ASSETS SEIZED AND CONFISCATED IN RELATION TO THE OFFENSES OF ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING AND MONEY LAUNDERING.**

V. CONCLUSIONS

The information provided by Belize makes it possible to recognize the efforts made by this country in the Central American region, in the different areas analyzed, in an integral and balanced approach to the drug phenomenon.

Among efforts that can be interpreted as strengths are the approval of a National Anti-drug Strategy; the ratification of the United Nations Conventions of 1971 and 1961, and the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption in 2002; the support of different public and private sector institutions in distributing information; and the implementation of a national system of prevention programs for target populations and prevention agents.

It is important to highlight the existence of a hemispheric information exchange network established by the Grid Alliance Committee with the support of CICAD/OAS, as well as the existence of effective methods for the disposal of pharmaceuticals and controlled chemical substances and the utilization of the pre-export notification mechanism.

Similarly, the timely exchange of operational information and collaboration among the authorities responsible for control of illicit drug trafficking is to be noted, together with the establishment of effective criminal standards to punish corruption; and, the existence of several entities responsible for the control of firearms and ammunition.

Due to the complexity of the phenomenon, Belize presents certain persistent weaknesses that merit special attention, which include the need to ratify the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols; the lack of development of workplace prevention programs; the lack of technical teaching staff; and the lack of a national survey to determine clear prevention policies and strategies. On the other hand, there is a lack of legislation for monitoring controlled chemical substances, a need to create an entity/entities for the administration and/or disposal of assets seized and confiscated in relation to the offenses of illegal drug trafficking and money laundering, together with a seized assets fund.

To conclude, CICAD recognizes the efforts made by Belize in the fight against the drug phenomenon and appreciates the clear and timely information provided by the country. Lastly, CICAD urges Belize to comply with the recommendations made in order to continue its integral, balanced efforts



to reduce drug supply and demand.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. REITERATE THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE FIRST EVALUATION ROUND 1999-2000 TO RATIFY THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION ON MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS.
2. SIGN AND RATIFY THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME AND ITS THREE PROTOCOLS.
3. CONDUCT A NATIONAL SURVEY ON THE GENERAL POPULATION IN ORDER TO FORMULATE CLEAR DRUG PREVENTION POLICIES AND STRATEGIES.
4. REITERATE THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE FIRST EVALUATION ROUND 1999-2000 TO ADOPT LEGISLATION TO REGULATE CONTROLLED CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES.
5. IMPLEMENT FULLY THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION AGAINST THE ILLICIT MANUFACTURING OF AND TRAFFICKING IN FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, EXPLOSIVES AND OTHER RELATED MATERIALS (CIFTA), IN PARTICULAR STRENGTHENING INFORMATION AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS IN THE AREA OF ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION.
6. CREATE AN ENTITY/ENTITIES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION AND/OR DISPOSAL OF ASSETS SEIZED AND CONFISCATED IN RELATION TO THE OFFENSES OF ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING AND MONEY LAUNDERING.





