



OAS | CICAD



**INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE
CONTROL COMMISSION**

CICAD

SIXTY-NINTH REGULAR SESSION
July 30, 2021
Virtual session 09:00 – 13:00 hrs (Washington D.C. time)

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FINAL REPORT

I. BACKGROUND

Article 21 of the Statute of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) provides that the Commission shall hold two regular sessions per year, one to address general topics and another to address specific technical topics determined by the Commission or such other matters that require its special attention. The Statute also provides that the Commission shall hold special sessions whenever it so decides or at the request of a majority of its member states.

At its sixty-sixth regular session, held in November 2019 in Miami, Florida, (CICAD/doc.2491/19 rev. 1), the Commission agreed to have one in-person high level Commissioners' regular session meeting in the fall (latter half of each calendar year; typically November) for four days, and a one-day, OAS mission-based meeting in the spring (first half of each calendar year; typically April or May) to approve CICAD's resolution language for the OAS General Assembly and approve the CICAD Annual Report for the previous calendar year.

Pursuant to Articles 20 and 21 of the Statute, and due to the current circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the sixty-ninth regular session was held virtually on July 30, 2021.

This report provides a summary of session, including document reference numbers, a list of decisions, and a summary of salient points raised by the delegations during the deliberations.

II. MINUTES

1. Opening remarks

Speakers:

a) Adam E. Namm, Executive Secretary, CICAD (CICAD/doc.CICAD/doc.2589/21)

Ambassador Namm opened the sixty-ninth regular session of CICAD, held virtually, by welcoming all authorities, CICAD commissioners, representatives of permanent observer countries, representatives of international organizations, and civil society representatives.

The Executive Secretary noted that the eighth round of CICAD's Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) is in full swing, with the focus this year on demand reduction and on measures of prevention, treatment, and recovery support. He stressed that this is a timely subject, given the recent data pointing to a rise in alcohol use and drug dependence during the pandemic and its accompanying increased stress and social isolation. He indicated that the MEM country reports for this year's evaluation will be presented for approval at CICAD 70 and that the CICAD Executive Secretariat (ES-CICAD) will also publish a hemispheric brief on demand reduction. The Ambassador took the opportunity to thank Canada for chairing the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) and the experts designated by Colombia and Barbados for serving as Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator of the Governmental Experts Group (GEG) this year, as well as to thank other member states for their participation. The

Ambassador announced that the IWG Chair will present for approval at CICAD 70 the questionnaires for the remaining evaluations of the MEM eighth round, which will take place in 2022 and 2023.

The Executive Secretary highlighted that the ES-CICAD is working on a supply report, with support from member states. He thanked the member states that participated in the Technical Working Group on Supply Indicators, which established the criteria that the forthcoming supply report will cover, and also thanked the 28 member states that provided data for the report. The supply report is expected to be presented at CICAD 70 as well.

The Ambassador highlighted two new initiatives the ES-CICAD has undertaken since the last CICAD regular session in Bogotá in December 2020: the first meeting of the Working Group on Aerial Drug Trafficking Control (June 2021), in which 29 member states participated, and the development, in conjunction with the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), of a series of online training courses to promote adequate access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion to illicit purposes.

The Executive Secretary expressed his appreciation to CICAD donors and thanked Colombia for chairing CICAD, especially Colombian Justice and Law Minister Wilson Ruíz Orejuela, as well as Vice Minister of Criminal Policy and Restorative Justice Diana Abaunza Millares, Colombia CICAD Commissioner.

**b) Arthur Weintraub, Secretary, Secretariat for Multidimensional Security (SMS/OAS)
(CICAD/doc.CICAD/doc.2588/21)**

Secretary Weintraub expressed his appreciation to Colombia, as CICAD Chair, for its leadership during the preparation of the CICAD draft resolution for the next session of the OAS General Assembly, to be held from November 9 to 12, 2021, and thanked Costa Rica for serving as Vice Chair of CICAD. He also thanked the representatives of the other member states for their contributions to this important document and recognized the ES-CICAD staff, in the person of Ambassador Namm, for the successes achieved in 2020 that are included in the annual report to be presented in today's session for approval.

Secretary Weintraub expressed his satisfaction with regard to significant results attained in the past year through multidimensional security programs carried out by CICAD and the other bodies that are part of the SMS/OAS. The Secretary indicated that all these results would not have been possible without the valuable support of donors and strategic partners, with whom there has been a considerable increase in the past year in the number of cooperation agreements designed to prevent transnational organized crime from capitalizing on governments' vulnerabilities and continuing to threaten the security and well-being of the public.

He also noted that transnational crime is having a serious impact on the rule of law and the integrity of financial markets, producing instability and political insecurity in the region. Secretary Weintraub therefore stressed the need to continue strengthening member states' security forces and all institutional systems involved in clamping down on transnational criminal organizations.

Finally, Secretary Weintraub reiterated his commitment to continue to support the implementation of coordinated, strategic, and comprehensive responses that make it possible to achieve concrete, sustainable results.

c) Wilson Ruiz Orejuela, CICAD Chair, Minister of Justice and Law, Colombian Ministry of Justice and Law (CICAD/doc.CICAD/doc.2591/21)

Minister Ruiz Orejuela, as Chair of CICAD, stressed the importance of the OAS/CICAD Hemispheric Drug Strategy and its Plan of Action 2021–2025, approved at the sixty-eighth session of CICAD held in Bogotá in December 2020. He said that both documents include comprehensive, balanced actions among nations to address the challenges that the world drug problem poses in the region. He also recognized the work of the ES-CICAD, through its various units, the Inter-American Observatory, and the groups of experts for their efforts in carrying out the 2021 work plan, as well as the MEM unit and the IWG for the eighth evaluation round.

Referring to the Hemispheric Drug Strategy, Minister Ruiz Orejuela noted that it reflects the member states' commitment to act in the face of the growing drug threat. The dynamics and complexity of the problem suggests the need for timely intervention in the new trends that have been observed. The CICAD Chair has thus proposed a comprehensive study of the various manifestations of the problem of synthetic drugs, such as production and use, beginning with a hemispheric forum on synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances, to respond to the proliferation of these drugs and of the many and diverse adulterants that increase the impact of drug use on public health.

The Minister highlighted the implementation of the comprehensive anti-drug national policy “Ruta Futuro” (“Future Path”) and reported that it has shown significant achievements in the consolidation of comprehensive strategies to counter each link in the drug trafficking network. He indicated that the “Ruta Futuro” policy emphasizes a public health approach, which is why the government of Colombia also places a priority on reducing drug use, with a differentiated, evidence-based perspective in the areas of prevention, treatment, and social inclusion, in line with the international scheduling framework of the United Nations.

The Minister concluded by encouraging countries as they work to develop and strengthen more effective policies and as they come together, interact, and cooperate through CICAD.

2. Adoption of the draft agenda and the draft schedule of activities

The Commission adopted the draft agenda (CICAD/doc. 2583/21corr.1) and the draft schedule of activities (CICAD/doc.2584/21corr.1) without amendment.

3. Presentation of draft CICAD Annual Report 2020 (CICAD/doc. 2585/21rev.1)

The CICAD Chair submitted the draft Annual Report of CICAD for 2020 (CICAD/doc.2585/21rev.1) to the Commission for approval.

Decisions

The Commission approved the draft CICAD Annual Report for 2020 (CICAD/doc. 2585/21rev.1).

4. Presentation of the draft resolution for the fifty-first regular session of the OAS General Assembly (CICAD/doc.2586/21rev.1)

Dr. Andrés Peña, Director of Drug Policy and Related Activities in the Colombian Ministry of Justice and Law, speaking on behalf of the CICAD Chair, presented to the Commission for its approval the draft resolution for the OAS General Assembly (CICAD/doc.2586/21rev.1). The Chair noted that the aim was to produce the most concise draft resolution possible, in line with the new criteria approved by the member states on June 17, 2021, within the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CHS), regarding the draft omnibus resolution that the Committee will submit to the consideration of the General Assembly. In this regard, the CHS recommended the drafting of specific mandates, with a maximum of eight (8) paragraphs on the part of CICAD. The Chair indicated that the document was to be limited only to paragraphs that present elements that are new in relation to those previously approved by the General Assembly in prior years, given that the approved mandates remain in effect and that the member states continue to join efforts to fully comply with them. The Chair also thanked the member states and the ES-CICAD for their support and flexibility during the drafting process, which made it possible to change the direction of the original draft, which had 26 paragraphs. The Chair then briefly summarized the main issues covered in the draft resolution.

In conclusion, the Chair indicated that consensus has been reached on the approval of paragraphs 1, 4, 6, 7, and 8, as well as the acknowledgment paragraphs. However, he reported that observations have been received in recent days from the delegations of Peru and the United States with regard to paragraphs 2, 3, and 5. In light of this, the Chair believes that such important issues require further discussion and thus proposes that the plenary approve paragraphs 1, 4, 6, 7, and 8, as well as the acknowledgment paragraphs, and leave paragraphs 2, 3, and 5 open for consideration and approval in the context of the CHS.

Delegations' comments

Mexico: Mexico's delegate thanked the authorities in attendance, the ES-CICAD, the Colombian Chair, and the Costa Rican Vice Chair. The delegate expressed his country's wish to convey a message of unity and brotherhood to all the countries in the region that have been dealing with the pandemic. He stressed the importance of joining forces to counter the world drug problem based on the principle of common, shared responsibility, and expressed his recognition of the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) process. The delegate shared his country's interest in strengthening ties with the North American and Latin American subcontinents, pointing to Mexico's role as a "connecting link" to integrate the Americas, promoting a people-centered approach that seeks just and humane solutions. He also urged that the environmental damage posed by the production of substances such as fentanyl and methamphetamines be recognized. Finally, he noted that the main programs his country has adopted to counter the drug problem are risk and harm reduction, therapeutic justice, and anti-addiction efforts.

Uruguay: The delegate extended greetings to the authorities present and to the ES-CICAD, and expressed appreciation for the presentation of the 2020 CICAD Annual Report and the draft paragraphs of the resolution for the OAS General Assembly. The delegate highlighted two aspects: 1) with regard to supply reduction, he stressed the need to strengthen cooperation mechanisms and emphasized the

decapitalization of drug trafficking groups, as well as the seizure of assets at the national, regional, and international level; and 2) with regard to demand reduction, he reaffirmed the importance of strengthening prevention and treatment, as well as the social reintegration of people with problematic drug use, taking into account an integral, balanced and multidimensional approach based on scientific evidence, respectful of human rights, and which incorporates a gender perspective together with intersectionality. Finally, he emphasized the need to work together, and urged the countries to continue strengthening cooperation mechanisms, maximizing the exchange of information and the principles that serve as the foundation for drug policies.

Canada: The delegate extended greetings and thanked the Chair and Vice Chair of CICAD and the Executive Secretariat for the work they have done. She expressed her country's satisfaction with what was achieved in 2020, despite the challenges related to COVID. In this regard, she pointed to the quick adjustments made to implement programs, especially the approval of the new Hemispheric Drug Strategy 2020 and its Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs 2021–2025, and referred to CICAD 70, where the progress made in the framework of the Intergovernmental Working Group will be presented. The delegate indicated that collaboration with the OAS is a priority for Canada and thanked the ES-CICAD for its support in advancing the country's feminist international assistance policy. Along these lines, she referred specifically to Canada's satisfaction with the implementation of the second phase of the Inter-American Program for Strengthening Gender Equality in Counterdrug Law Enforcement Agencies (GENLEA).

Mexico: In reference to CICAD's draft paragraphs for the resolution, the delegate agreed with the methodology proposed by the Chair. The delegate indicated that his country supports the alternative wording to paragraph 5 presented by the United States. He also indicated that Mexico was proposing an adjustment to the wording of paragraph 1, with the aim of expanding its scope. Along these lines, he proposed substituting the concepts of "drug demand and supply reduction" with the concepts that the delegations previously agreed to in the Plan of Action, "measures of prevention, treatment, and recovery support" and "measures to control and counter the illicit cultivation, production, trafficking, and distribution of drugs."

Nicaragua: The delegate greeted the authorities present and reported that his delegation had not received instructions from the capital, and therefore the country was continuing consultations on the presentation regarding the paragraphs for the resolution.

Chair: Considering Mexico's proposal, the Chair proposed that paragraphs 4, 6, 7, and 8 be approved, along with the acknowledgment paragraphs, and noted that there are observations to paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 5, which will be discussed within the Committee on Hemispheric Security.

Decisions

The Commission approved paragraphs 4, 6, 7, and 8, as well as the acknowledgment paragraphs, of the draft resolution for the fifty-first regular session of the OAS General Assembly (CICAD/doc.2586/21rev.1). Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 5 remain open for discussion and approval by the Committee on Hemispheric Security.

5. Topics, dates, and location of the seventieth regular session of CICAD

Costa Rica, as Vice Chair of CICAD, congratulated Colombia for its leadership as CICAD Chair during 2020-2021, and ratified his country's willingness to hold the seventieth regular session virtually in Costa Rica from November 16 to 19, 2021. The Commissioner highlighted as topics of particular importance the strengthening of gender equality in police forces and the Inter-American Program for Strengthening Gender Equality in Counterdrug Law Enforcement Agencies (GENLEA); court-supervised treatment programs; aerial drug trafficking control; and the protection of the environment from the threats generated by illicit drug trafficking in the region. Finally, the Chair recognized Paraguay's candidacy for Vice Chair, which had been circulated to the delegations and will be presented for consideration at the seventieth regular session.

The CICAD Chair offered the floor to delegations for possible topics to be considered during the seventieth regular session of CICAD:

Canada: The Canadian delegate emphasized the importance of continuing to promote opportunities for civil society participation during the next regular session, noting that the knowledge that civil society brings to the area of problematic substance use is instrumental. Canada also indicated that the participation of civil society promotes a broader perspective on key issues related to drug policy.

Colombia: The Colombian delegate reiterated the importance of civil society's role in the framework of CICAD, as well as its contributions to drug policy.

United States: The U.S. delegate reiterated the importance of civil society and its perspective on drug policy and programs, and suggested that the issues to be addressed in the next regular session include non-scheduled synthetic drugs and chemical precursors.

6. Statements by OAS Permanent Observers, international, regional and civil society organizations accredited to the OAS

Asociación Internacional de Hospicios y Cuidados Paliativos (ASOCUPAC) - María Adelaida Córdoba Nuñez

The delegate thanked CICAD for including Objective 4 in the Plan of Action 2021–2025, which focuses on ensuring adequate availability and accessibility of substances subject to international control for medical and scientific purposes, while also preventing their diversion toward illicit activities. The delegate stressed that the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the fragility of systems and the need for strengthened supply chains for controlled medications. She added that it is essential to improve the ability of the social and health-care system to provide services in the area of palliative care and pain relief. She also indicated that according to the second chapter of the final document of UNGASS 2016 and the OAS/CICAD Hemispheric Strategy, it is the responsibility of governments to ensure adequate access to controlled essential medications. The delegate expressed her concern over the inclusion of

the subject of cannabis in CICAD's resolution and suggested developing policies to support the local manufacture of controlled essential medications, shared procurement, and the education of health personnel in the rational use of these medications, in collaboration with other international agencies. Finally, she offered the association's support in the design and implementation of strategies to improve access to essential medications.

Russia

The delegate thanked CICAD for the opportunity to present the assessment of the global drug situation against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. The delegate emphasized that the pandemic had slowed down the global economy, but international drug trafficking had not been impacted. He explained that in the medium term, Russia experienced a surge in drug-related crimes and believes that the pandemic will increase drug consumption, production, and trafficking. In that context, the representative mentioned that cocaine air trafficking decreased, and maritime trafficking increased as organized crime developed new transportation models and routes. Similarly, the delegate informed that the domestic drug market had experienced a visible restructuring during COVID-19 in terms of seized drugs, of which 55% were synthetic and 38% were plant based. The delegate thanked CICAD for participation in Russia's side event on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on addressing the world drug problem, at the 64th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

Organización DIANOVA – Uruguay

The delegate thanked the delegation of Canada for expressing the importance of viewing civil society as a strategic partner in combatting the drug problem. It indicated that at the national level, the organization has close ties to the Uruguayan National Drug Secretariat; however, at the hemispheric level, there is still a lack of strong declarations and actions that would position civil society as strategic partners and not merely as useful operators. The delegate requested support from CICAD to create actions, exchanges of dialogue, and opportunities at the regional level that would strengthen the position of civil society.

WOLA – John Walsh

The delegate expressed his concern over the weakened participation of civil society in hemispheric and multilateral forums. He indicated that meetings held virtually due to the pandemic provide the opportunity to convene broader gatherings in which civil society should participate. He stressed that the pandemic and the social and economic crisis are affecting the lives of people involved in illicit economies and drugs. For example, during the lockdowns, rural populations that depend on illicit economies ended up even more isolated and under the control of armed actors.

The delegate explained that the Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS was discussed at the United Nations this year and said it is important to take measures in that regard to end inequalities and expand harm reduction programs and other treatments for substance use, noting that the associated stigma and discrimination are barriers for access to health and social mechanisms. He indicated that the following trends have been observed in the past 60 years in the Americas, due to prohibition: strengthened drug trafficking networks; disheartening human rights effects, such as disproportionate and large-scale incarceration; avoidable infection from communicable diseases; and a crisis from a lack of pain relief. He asked that CICAD help to improve existing drug policies and that these be evidence-based, respect human rights, and promote sustainable development.

Finally, the WOLA delegate stated that civil society remains committed to the overall objectives of UNGASS 2016, the 2019 High-Level Declaration, and the common position on drug policy of the United Nations. He also suggested that CICAD collaborate with the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, which recently published its report, to disseminate the content and recommendations with the member states.

7. Closing remarks by the Chair (CICAD/doc.2590/21)

Ms. Diana Abaunza Millares, Vice Minister of Crime Policy and Restorative Justice in the Colombian Ministry of Justice and Law, thanked the member states for their effort, commitment, contributions, and determination to work in accordance with the objectives proposed for holding the first regular session of 2021 in the middle of the pandemic. She likewise expressed appreciation to the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security, to the Executive Secretariat of CICAD, and to Costa Rica for the work carried out as Vice Chair of the Commission. She indicated that the objective of the meeting was to consider and approve the CICAD resolution for the next regular session of the OAS General Assembly and to present the CICAD Annual Report for 2020. The work that was done shows the commitment and collective efforts of member countries in addressing the world drug problem.

The Vice Minister reiterated the importance of having an updated Hemispheric Drug Strategy and a Plan of Action for the next five years and said that Colombia is committed to both agreements. Likewise, Colombia will continue to promote the “International Forum on Synthetic Drugs: New Realities and a Prospective Analysis for the Hemisphere,” as it is extremely important to share experiences regarding the new dynamics and challenges for the countries affected by this global phenomenon.

She stated that Colombia, as Chair of CICAD, has identified matters that require the Hemisphere’s special attention and commitment. It is essential to consider the impacts of the recent pandemic on drug users, which calls for the creation of strategies to ensure access to social and health services. It is also urgent to address the gender perspective and the recommendations laid out in the GENLEA Handbook: Strategies and Good Practices for Strengthening Gender Equality in Counterdrug Law Enforcement Agencies. Another central issue is the unavoidable need to protect the ecosystems and natural resources that are increasingly threatened by the impacts associated with the world drug problem. She underscored the importance of the role of the Inter-American Observatory on drugs and the national observatories, and the need to strengthen their efforts to produce assessments, studies, and evaluations that help move public policies in the right direction.

Finally, she indicated that it is essential for member states to continue their steadfast, active participation in the groups of experts and technical working groups coordinated by the CICAD Executive Secretariat in the context of the Hemispheric Drug Strategy, and to coordinate regional cooperation actions to address the challenges of the drug problem.

III. DECISIONS

The Commission took the following decisions:

1. The Commission adopted the draft agenda (CICAD/doc.2583/21corr.1) and the draft schedule of activities (CICAD/doc.2584/21corr.1).
2. The Commission approved the draft CICAD 2020 Annual Report (CICAD/doc.2585/21rev.1).
3. The Commission approved paragraphs 4, 6, 7, and 8, as well as the acknowledgment paragraphs, of the draft resolution for the fifty-first regular session of the OAS General Assembly (CICAD/doc.2586/21rev.1). Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 5 remain open for discussion and approval by the Committee on Hemispheric Security.

IV. PARTICIPANTS

1. CICAD Member States

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, The Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela.

2. OAS Permanent Observers

France, Italy, Philippines, Russia and Spain.

3. Civil Society Organizations

Agencia Ecu mica de Comunicaci n en Am rica Latina y Caribe (ALC Noticias), DIANOVA, Instituto RIA, Intercambios Asociaci n Civil, International Association of Hospice and Palliative Care (IAHPC), Federaci n Nacional de Personer as de Colombia (Fenalper), Red Iberoamericana de Organizaciones no Gubernamentales que Trabajan en Drogodependencias (RIOD), Red Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Personas Trans (RedLacTrans), Corporacion Defensor a Militar, Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) and International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC).