



National Drug Control System

Seventh National Drug Control System Users' Group Meeting DRAFT REPORT September 1–3, 2009 Mexico City, Mexico

Opening Speeches

10:00 -10:45 S.R.E., Conference Room “Benito Juárez”

-Opening Ceremony

- Opening speech by UNODC: Regional Representative, Antonio Mazzitelli
- Opening speech by SRE: Mrs. Socorro Flores
- Opening speech by COFEPRIS: Ms. Gabriela Iturbe Montiel
- Opening speech by UNODC: Global Project Manager, Mr. Gert Eidherr

Welcoming Remarks

Mr. Antonio Mazzitelli, Regional Representative for UNODC Mexico, expressed his gratitude for the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Mexico. Mr. Mazzitelli highlighted the challenge faced by the region, as there is still no legal definition for neither transit nor consumption country. He pointed out that despite the ongoing struggle against drug trafficking, it seems that it has grown as an industry, and as a consequence, drug consumption and violence has also increased.



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NDS is an important tool for the surveillance of controlled substances. He also said that the NDS system is very helpful in terms of controlled substances.

Mrs. Socorro Flores, General Director for Global Themes, said that according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, synthetic drugs represent a challenge for the government, due to the fact that these drugs can be easily manufactured with ingredients that are legal in most countries. Flores also pointed out that in Mexico, criminal organizations have adapted to new mechanisms to produce and distribute these types of drugs and as a result, new tendencies can be seen. The government has attempted to solve the problem through the banning of pseudoephedrine, to avoid the existence of precursors in the country. Mexico is currently searching for a new classification of precursors. Flores said the work of UNODC in this matter was crucial.

Mr. Gert Eidherr, Global Manager of NDS stated that since the first conference on drug control that was held in Shanghai 100 years ago, drugs consumption has become a problem of global concern. The NDS system represents an effort to develop and provide a common good for all, to facilitate international cooperation. Mr. Eidherr encouraged NDS users to collaborate on the improvement of this tool through the exchange of experiences and opinions.

Selection of Chairperson and adoption of the agenda

Mr. Gert Eidherr, Global Project Manager, ESU/ITS/UNODC, called the meeting to order and proposed that the meeting be co-chaired by Mr. Stéphane Lucas from France and Mr. Gert Eidherr from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna. The proposed agenda was adopted.

Presentation of NDS status

Mr. Gert Eidherr, Global Project Manager for NDS, said the system has been useful as a tool for authorities who control drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals, which make up a large portion of annual transactions. NDS is available in English, French, Russian and Spanish. There are a total of 50 countries using NDS and 16 of them are OAS members..

The NDS system can be used online and includes the possibility to manage narcotics, psychotropic and precursors, according to national and international controls, which allows for exchange of data. The current release of the software is the 6.0 version. The development team is small but is expected to increase in the coming years to allow for the improvement of the tool.



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Raquel Méndez from Argentina has claimed that there is a problem with products which come from countries like India, which complicates the scenario, especially with products like pseudoephedrine and ephedrine. Méndez asked if it is possible to know which companies using NDS are trustworthy.

Mr. Eideherr said that in the case of India, the Narcotics Central information can be used by asking the precursors department to see which companies could be involved.

Mr. Eideherr said NDS works with the loading of data, which can be used for statistical purposes on the precursors market. The current method of work is manual. Mr. Eideherr said NDS users should collaborate to avoid mistakes and keep a proper and accurate data entry to the system. He also mentioned the need for the cooperation of the private sector as well as to check the available legal framework in each country that will allow the national authority to request the necessary reports on domestic trade.

NDS Improvements

Mr. Vladimir Zemskov explained the enhancements of the future NDS 7. New reports features have been developed in order to make NDS more practical to the national authorities. The new report features will provide a better follow up procedure towards suspected movements of controlled substances. The new version will be available in the coming months.

Presentation by Germany

Mr. Dirk Ohlenforst, from the Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices explained during the users group meeting the scope of control in Germany in line with the Conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988.

Control of domestic trade is done by obligatory usage of consignment forms. Each consignment form is a quadruplicate record. The original is to be sent to the Institute, the first copy (acknowledgment of receipt) and the second copy (delivery note) to be sent with consignment, while the third copy is to be retained by the sender. The consignee has to sign the second copy and send this back to the sender while retaining the third copy in his documentation. The Institute receives ca. 25,000 consignment forms per day resulting in a total of approx. six million consignment forms per year. The consignment forms are scanned and scanned data is transferred to the database.

On the international trade side Germany issues ca. 5,000 import authorizations, and ca. 5,000 export authorizations per year.

Germany is using BUGIS software since 2000 as the National Drug Control Software, which supports control in line with the Conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988.

Current focus with BUGIS software is to be able to communicate with the NDS system further on.

Germany would like to participate in the development of electronic data exchange principles.





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Presentation by Bolivia

Mr. Mauricio Zambrana, from the Controlled Substances Division (DGSQ), said that there are currently 42 controlled substances in Bolivia. They use the System *Centinela* (system developed under the UNODC project D73) to follow up all the different stages of those substances, from local buy authorization, licenses, transport, revisions and incomes.

Revisions are made to any persons or activity which involves the production, manufacture, storage, imports, exports, marketing, transport, or any other that includes any of the 42 substances.

Presentation by Brazil

Ms. Marcia Goncalvez, from the National System for Controlled Products Administration, said one of the biggest problems Brazil has in the control of substances is the geography of the country. With regard to the supervision of this complicated geography, the Sanitary Surveillance National System (ANVISA) and the Estates and localities work together and share responsibilities. ANVISA register activities which involve medicine, food, health products, blood and derivatives.

This office use electronic tools to make the control of substances easier. The main reason for developing an electronic system is the growing use of psychopharmacs, according to the INCB reports, where Brazil appears as a big consumer of drug stimulants.

The former model used was insufficient for the consolidation of the database which made it difficult to achieve the desired goals and implement legal measures.

The aim is to produce updated information, simplify the registration process in drugstores to allow the following up of products and the tracking of the market without making it invasive and aligned with the way drugstores personnel works, through the XML system.

The system includes 5 steps:

- 1.-Registration
- 2.-Transmission profile for the drugstore
- 3.-Software acquisition
- 4.-System adhesion
- 5.-Activities sending

Mr. Eugenio Neves (ANVISA) explained the change process between the former system and the new one which began in 2007 and finished in February 2008. Now, the registration of activities takes 10 minutes in 37,000 drugstores.

Brazil is working on developing new strategies to make more synthetic reports, to help to gather accurate reports on precursors diversion and to notify authorities about irregularities.

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Mr. Gert Eidherr asked about how to avoid possible mistakes made by personnel of drugstores. According to Mr. Neves, authorities can review any irregularity, although mistakes can only be corrected in the first 24 hours.

The system controls the activities of 80% of the drugstores in the country.

Presentation by Chile

Alma Belmar from the Psychotropic and Drugs Department informed the participants that the NDS system had been installed in Chile in 2004; however, the country only began to work with this tool in 2005. In Chile, 30% of controlled substances are imported and 70% are exported. All certificates are produced in the system. Technology is used to simplify all the processes since it allows far access, informed procedures, as well as interaction among the different areas interested in supervision and sanitary control.

In the country, different instances are involved through the internet. Belmar said NDS would be more useful in cases that allow endorsement online, consult information about new companies and local marketing.

Belmar added that the police and the Psychotropic and Drugs Department work together to detain suspicious movements. The NDS system simplifies the reporting to INCB.

Presentation by Cuba

Ms. Monica Pisonero, from the Ministry of Health in Cuba said this department has control over substances at a national level. The National Drugstores Direction also coordinates strengths with the INCB.

The NDS system has been operational in Cuba since March 2009. This has replaced the use of a large amount of paper.

Through the use of this electronic tool a database is to be developed to facilitate the information exchange with customs on XML, make electronic forms and simplify the sending of reports to INCB.



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Presentation by Costa Rica

In Costa Rica the system works in 2 governmental dependencies, located in different ministries; the Ministry of Health, in charge of the information and control related to narcotics, psychotropic of medical use; and the Presidential Ministry (ICD) in charge of the control and information related to chemical precursors.

The National Drugs Statistic Unit compiles the information and provides the official statistics on the matter.

On precursor's issues, Costa Rica has:

- 623 importer companies.
- 9 exporter companies.
- 1972 imported transactions during 2008.
- 531 exported transactions during 2008.
- 526 local users of Frames I or II substances.

The main benefits of using the NDS system are the existence of a bigger facility towards obtaining statistics that allows for a better and more accurate monitoring of the importation of controlled substances and preparation avoiding their diversion to illicit channels. It also facilitates the generation of quarterly and annual reports that the country has to send to INCB and other authorities or International Organisms. It minimizes the presence of mistakes and simplifies the custom procedures by the inquiry authorities; allows the automatic procedures required to complete the necessary data analysis to generate alert messages.

Presentation by El Salvador

Mrs. Lucía Méndez, from the Public Health Board said the PEN online system is used to make reports about international movements. The unit in her charge uses a manual system of registration to control international marketing; they have data from each movement from the first date on paper. They also lead a close surveillance process through inspections and experts revisions. There is a unique window for imports-exports.

The NDS system is not yet operational in El Salvador, despite the fact that people from customs have been receiving training support since 2002. The country faces a lack of human resources since the unit only has a small team and is working against the clock. Mendez said the NDS system facilitates the monitoring and management of the international transactions, as well as a better control of the establishment involved in this process.





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Presentation by France

Mr. Stéphane Lucas, from the French Health Products Agency said NDS has been operational in France since March 2004, in its version 5.1, which is used to expand marketing licenses for imports and exports as well as statistics reports.

In 2005 UNODC and AFSAPS agreed to maintain NDS. Version 6.0 was installed in September 2006, which allowed more features as modules on one screen, limited access and the possibility of choosing the language.

The system allows control over the fees of the exportation country, as well as the creation of copies of requirements of authorizations to avoid the double work in the process of an import or export authorization. The system is easy to use and makes it easier to establish a link among license types and authorization numbers.

Currently, NDS does not provide control over the import certificate in case of an export, which could lead to duplication of import certificates in export authorizations;. It is important the system can identify this mistake.

The new NDS web system has to be simple to enhance the participation of companies; it must also contain high levels of security and be able to transmit scurried data.

- Improvement proposal: add a summary (in permitted/restricted substances for example) with the estimates, the current approved and endorsed quantities and balance estimates for each country, for a better control of export.

Suggested developments:

- Electronic submissions of import/export authorizations, licenses and annual reports by companies via NDS web
- Electronic exchanges of import/export certificates between authorities.

Presentation by Grenada

Mr. Anthony Cyrus, from the Ministry of Health in Grenada said the Government is responsible for controlled substances surveillance. Despite the fact the country is small; they count with 35 private drugstores and 4 important companies which carry out imports-exports movements. Before the NDS system, all processes were carried out manually, which required a lot of time and frequent mistakes were made. In 2007 Trinidad installed NDS, and Granada took the chance to join the programme. Planning skills have since been improved and the working day has been reduced. Nowadays, the system is used for narcotics and psychotropics since their legal framework does not allow for sufficient control over the precursors and it is expected that the government and private sector can use the system together and work also together in the improvement of the laws to provide a better control over the precursors chemicals.



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Presentation by Jamaica

Mr. Jason D. Samuels from the National Security Ministry said Jamaica has a legal framework to ensure the surveillance of controlled substances through the Act of 1999. The goal is to provide a framework for guiding the control of substances due to the fact that the government grants licenses for exports and imports, and therefore, it is necessary to promote the importance of precursors.

Licenses are granted to the establishments by the pharmaceutical division, which guarantee the legality of substances for a certain period of time. Information recorded must include the name of the license requestor, the date of the authorization, the name of the substance, activity etc. The authority works with limited resources; only two people carry out this job manually. They propose enhancing the working capacity of the authority, as well as updating the process so that it can be carried out by electronic means.

Presentation by Mexico

Ms. Gabriela Iturbe from COFEPRIS said this office grants 1,000 authorizations for imports and 552 for exports of drugs and psychotropic substances. For essential chemicals they receive 900 files for imports and 850 for exports. They are in charge of yearly and quarterly statistics reports. Thanks to UNODC, Mexico was incorporated into the NDS programme, which was installed in Mexico in 2003, with development and training for 5 persons who were in charge of the database. In 2005, installation of the programme was completed in the main custom authority of the country through means of remote connection.

The government has studied the possibility of modifying the legal framework, as well as signing trade agreements with other governmental authorities to make them understand the advantages of NDS. In 2008, 15 persons were trained on how to use the system. The NDS system simplifies the process of compiling paperwork, reports, consulting, on the surveillance of drugstores, veterinary drugs storage, clinical laboratories and addiction clinics.

COFEPRIS has proposed the following improvements/enhancements to NDS:

- Additional printed permits to control the estimate on drugstores through NDS.

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- Allow the in activation of substances, avoiding duplicity.
- Update authorities list
- To provide printed licenses for domestic transactions.
- Modify EMM module to be used generally, with detailed movements.
- Improve the PEN on line system, which is not able to generate XML files.
- Is expected PEN on line to be able to exchange information internationally.
- In case is needed to send a pre notification, this file can be sent to other national Drug Control System offices.

Presentation by Panama

Mr. Víctor Nelson, Legal Assessor for CONAPRED said that 956 companies in Panama carry out cross-border activities. The CONAPRED is in charge of managing and controlling substances for the industrial sector, meanwhile the Drugstores and Drugs Direction is in charge of the management of precursors and chemicals substances.

This department carries out the following activities:

- Elaborate licenses requests
- Imports, exports permissions on controlled substances.
- Elaborate annual plan for psychotropics and drugs for INCB.
- Quarterly Reports and statistics

Panama uses the following electronic tools for the controlled substances movements:

- Skype
- PEN on line
- NDS

PEN on line system has been useful for exports pre notification on controlled substances for industrial and medical use.

It was also mentioned that due to some problems with the internet service NDS cannot be used as needed, Mr. Nelson mentioned that CONAPRED is working on finding a solution to this problem in order to continue with the incorporation of data to NDS and to enable the system to be fully operational as soon as possible.

Presentation by United Kingdom

Mr. Owen Rowland, from the Home Office Drugs Strategy Unit said the control of drugs and precursors is crucial towards keeping our communities safe.

Mr. Rowland mentioned that criminal groups have taken advantage of the available chemical substances in the market in order to develop and design illegal drugs.

The NDS system has improved their skills which have resulted in more effective policing. Rowland regrets that the United Kingdom did not sign up to NDS earlier, although, he stated that his department is interested in the experiences and lessons learned from other countries.



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Presentation by Uruguay

Ms. Ana Alicia Plá, from the Ministry of Health Uruguay, said that although this office is responsible for the transit, storage, distribution and sales of controlled substances, NDS is only used for imports and exports movements. Companies provide monthly and quarterly balances on Excel. They have to keep a copy of these records on their books; these files must be kept for two years and a request must be made if they wish to destroy them. Companies have to make reports for INCB, also.

The largest imports-exports amounts are from psychotropic and precursors, which result in over 2,000 requests for imports and 1,500 for exports. The system could be improved if local movements of controlled substances could be added to/monitored through NDS. Ms. Plá also requested the improvement of the exchange of notifications about endorsement from customs.

Presentation by Venezuela

Ms. Dayana Barrios from the National Antidrug Office said Venezuela is a transit country for controlled substances. The National Guard, local Police and Scientific Police communicate with each other through the internet and cooperate on the surveillance of such substances. The National Antidrug Plan contains details of all national policies against drug trafficking; one of them intends to control the productive legal process of controlled substances which are able to be deviated to drugs and psychotropic production. Venezuela grants permission for the use of controlled substances, as well as leading the surveillance process of registers and storage. Previous notification is made through the system PEN on line.

The institutions that work with controlled substances are:

- Vice Ministry of Intermediate Industries
- Health Ministry of Popular Power and Social Protection
- District Attorney's Office

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Venezuela has been receiving training on the NDS system since 2007. They need a central system to coordinate actions among the different entities. However, NDS has not yet been installed due to the problems their connection have with the ONA.



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Presentation by UNODC Peru- PRELAC project

Mr. Clifford Craig from the Prevention of the Diversion of Drug Precursors in the Latin American and Caribbean (PRELAC), said that this project is an European Commission financed initiative within the framework of Instrument for Stability: IfS/2008/170-366.

The specific objective is to strengthen the capacities of national administrative control authorities of selected countries within the region to prevent the diversion of precursors into illicit channels. In order to achieve this there will be efforts to improve the communication between countries through the installation of a web based computer programme that would allow the beneficiaries rapid communication on exports/imports of precursors. Furthermore, the objective is to enhance the cooperation between national administrative control authorities of these countries thanks to a better knowledge of each others' systems and the overall trends in precursors' diversion in the region through enhanced exchange of information. There will be trainings and seminars bringing together administrative control authorities with representatives of industrial associations where a common code of conduct and reporting process and voluntary collaboration by the industrial chemical operators will be promoted.

They have a 6 point plan to achieve their goals:

1. Organize a kick-off seminar for target groups and baseline study to establish, types, volumes and prices of precursors used for the production of cocaine.
2. Establish a web-based system of exchange of information between all beneficiary countries.
3. Strengthen the relationship between chemical operators and administrative control authorities.

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4. Enhance the capacity of investigation/inspection of administrative control authorities of each beneficiary country through trainings and exchange of best practices.

5. Contribute towards harmonizing legal and regulatory control mechanisms within each beneficiary country.

6. Improve effectiveness of customs to perform control of consignments of chemicals



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