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Fifth Intersessional Meeting

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Secretariat for Multidimensional Security
Organization of American States (OAS)**

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Distinguished chair and honorable delegations:

I extend greetings from Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the Organization of American States. It is an honor to represent the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, known by its Spanish language acronym, CICAD.

As a region, the Americas have been in the vanguard of drug policy, prior to and after UNGASS 2016. As part of the OAS, which is the pre-eminent regional organization in the Western Hemisphere, CICAD has played an essential role in the Western Hemisphere's drug policy discussions, as well as policy implementation.

CICAD partners with various international organizations and programs, such as UNODC, the Pan-American Health Organization, the World Health Organization, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and

the European Commission (including both the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and the COPOLAD program), to ensure our actions are aligned and do not duplicate efforts. I am pleased to illustrate how CICAD has contributed to the implementation of each of the seven thematic UNGASS operational recommendations:

Regarding demand reduction and related measures including prevention and treatment, as well as other health-related issues, CICAD's Demand Reduction Unit supports OAS member states to strengthen their human and institutional capacity in drug prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation, work which is included within the agenda of the Demand Reduction Expert Group, currently chaired by Chile. Specifically, and in addition to continuous work with member states in promoting the use of best standards of care, our Demand Reduction Unit is working to create a new cadre of drug prevention and treatment professionals trained and certified in the Universal Prevention Curriculum (UPC) and the Universal Treatment Curriculum (UTC). Given the importance of including academia in demand reduction programming, CICAD has established a consortium of universities in the Hemisphere for collaboration in training and research in this subject. Additionally, and following member states' requests to address vulnerable populations, CICAD is working to disseminate the Adolescent Intervention Curricula in the Caribbean Region and Latin America.

Regarding ensuring availability of and access to controlled substances exclusively for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion, CICAD has facilitated important discussions on how to increase the availability of opioid-based medicines for palliative care without creating the conditions for, or escalating an epidemic of, opioid misuse.

Regarding supply reduction and related measures, CICAD's Supply Reduction Unit supports OAS member states to strengthen their capacity to disrupt the illicit production and distribution of illicit drugs, including synthetics such as fentanyl, new psychoactive substances (NPS), and the precursor chemicals used in their manufacture. Additionally, CICAD delivers capacity building in counterdrug intelligence to law enforcement personnel at its Regional Counterdrug Intelligence School of the Americas (ERCAIAD, by its Spanish-language acronym) in Bogota, Colombia, and the Caribbean Counterdrug Intelligence Training School in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. The Supply Reduction Unit brings together experts from the hemisphere to share experiences and discuss recent trends and developments within the framework of the Group of Experts on Maritime Narcotrafficking (currently chaired by the USA), as well as the Group of Experts on Chemical Substances and Pharmaceutical Products (currently chaired by Panama). The latter expert group addresses the concerning topics of

new psychoactive substances and precursor chemicals. In addition, CICAD's Supply Reduction Unit is focused on the control of internet sales of illicit drugs and precursor chemicals, as well as identifying and intercepting postal shipments of such substances.

CICAD's Group of Experts for the Control of Money Laundering (known by its Spanish language acronym, GELAVEX), currently chaired by Bolivia, brings together experts on money laundering and financing of terrorism from the OAS member states, permanent observers countries, and international organizations. The discussions and analysis that take place within the group generate mandates for the OAS's Department against Transnational Organized Crime, which is the Technical Secretariat for GELAVEX. The Department against Transnational Organized Crime, in turn, provides technical assistance to OAS member states so they can develop and implement programs aimed at improving anti-money laundering systems and adhere to international regulations and standards. Per GELAVEX's Plan of Action 2018-2020, key issues include the use of expert reports in money laundering cases, particularly in the prosecutorial stage of the process; the analysis of new typologies of money laundering, specially the use of virtual currencies; and best practices in the international cooperation and coordination between administrative, judicial authorities

and specialized agencies for assets recovery and the administration of seized and forfeited assets.

Regarding cross-cutting issues: drugs and human rights, youth, children, women and communities, OAS member states are in the vanguard when it comes to treating the drug problem as a human rights issue, taking a public health approach, and considering the most vulnerable populations. I want to highlight three concrete actions we carry out under this recommendation:

- Mainstream a gender perspective into drug policies: CICAD's Plan of Action recommends the incorporation of a gender perspective into all stages of the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of drug policies and programs. Specifically, the CICAD Executive Secretariat has undertaken two innovative gender-related projects: First, the Inter-American Program for Strengthening Gender Equality in Counterdrug Law Enforcement Agencies (GENLEA), which promotes gender mainstreaming in the Americas to increase effectiveness in antidrug intelligence investigations and operations; for example, in handling informants and performing interrogations, as well as serving as undercover agents. Second, CICAD's project entitled Gender and the Criminal Justice System will analyze the

gender sensitivity (including women and LGBTBI populations) of criminal justice systems in the Western Hemisphere, and examine how different alternatives to incarceration for low level drug-related offenses present a gender bias.

- When promoting national sentencing policies, practices and guidelines for drug related offenses, proportional sentencing, and alternatives to conviction or punishment, the Institutional Strengthening Unit of CICAD is working with 15 OAS member states to promote alternatives to incarceration, including but not limited to drug treatment courts, community courts, diversion programs, case management, social integration strategies, and other therapeutic justice approaches for adults and juveniles.
- Youth, children, and communities are also central to our work, with, for example, a focus on adolescents in our demand reduction prevention and treatment programs.

Regarding evolving reality, trends and existing circumstances, emerging and persistent challenges and threats, the CICAD Executive Secretariat encourages free and frank dialogue among OAS member states. New psychoactive substances, regulatory markets, non-medical use and misuse of pharmaceuticals are among the key issues discussed in CICAD fora. In relation to promoting the use and analysis of relevant,

reliable, and objective data, the Inter-American Observatory on Drugs, known by its Spanish language acronym, OID, is CICAD's statistics, information, and scientific research unit, providing assistance to member states in the establishment of observatories, drug use surveillance, and epidemiology. Evidence-based national drug policies must include action plans and strategies that collect reliable and objective data. The OID assists member countries in gathering scientific evidence, create and strengthen drug information networks and early warning systems, designed to identify emerging threats in order to support sound, evidence-based drug policy. I want to highlight the upcoming publication of CICAD's 2018 Report on Drug Use in the Americas, which contains a wealth of trends, statistics and conclusions on the drug problem in the Western Hemisphere.

Regarding strengthening international cooperation based on the principle of common and shared responsibility, OAS member states recognize the cross-cutting nature of the drug problem, and understand the need to take comprehensive approaches when addressing the dimensions of that problem. For example, CICAD is working with OAS member states to establish regional drug information networks, to improve information sharing between countries on the drug problem. CICAD also promotes horizontal cooperation among OAS member states to build capacity, including the provision of specialized technical

assistance in the design and implementation of drug strategies and action plans at the national and subnational levels. The Western Hemisphere has achieved consensus on important points, and has done so consistent with UN Conventions and UNGASS.

Evaluation is crucial in international cooperation, and it is vital as OAS member states strive to improve their drug policies and align them to the UNGASS recommendations. The OAS has a unique tool, the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism, or MEM, which is crucial to formulating better drug policies. The MEM, mandated by the 1998 Summit of the Americas and the only peer-review tool of its kind in the world, evaluates member states' implementation of the Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs 2016-2020 in five focus areas: institutional strengthening, demand reduction, supply reduction, control measures, and international cooperation. The latest MEM round, the seventh since 1998, also takes into account the UNGASS 2016 operational recommendations, as well as the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, covers crosscutting issues such as human rights, gender and social inclusion, and will produce valuable national evaluations on OAS member states that will be published in the spring of 2019 and a Hemispheric Evaluation Report in the fall of 2019. The reports will measure how far the Hemisphere has implemented the OAS/CICAD

Plan of Action, which is closely aligned with the UNGASS operational recommendations.

Regarding alternative development, CICAD's Experts Group on Comprehensive and Sustainable Alternative Development, currently chaired by Ecuador, approved a new framework at its meeting this September that includes alternative development in the urban context -- for example, taking into account low level urban drug dealers -- as well as in the traditional rural context.

CICAD's evidence-based drug policies; drug policies focused on individuals; a public health approach; a gender perspective; and guaranteeing respect for human rights: all of these are not new concepts for OAS member states. Similar principles are found in the 2010 CICAD Hemispheric Drug Strategy, and the subsequent Plan of Action 2016-2020; the 2013 OAS Report on the Drug Problem in the Americas; the 2013 OAS Declaration of Antigua, Guatemala "For a Comprehensive Policy against the World Drug Problem in the Americas" from the 43rd regular session of the OAS General Assembly, and the 2014 OAS Resolution of Guatemala "Reflections and Guidelines to Formulate and Follow Up on Comprehensive Policies to Address the World Drug Problem in the Americas" from the 46th OAS Special General Assembly. The Plan of Action is designed to address the multidimensional drug problem that adversely affects health, social

cohesion, citizen security, democratic institutions, development, and economic activities in the Americas, and is closely aligned with the 2016 UNGASS recommendations and the UN 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

Civil society plays a vital role in CICAD's work. Civil society participates in every CICAD regular session, and CICAD Executive Secretariat staff consult often with civil society on the full range of issues related to the drug problem.

I want to acknowledge and congratulate the leadership of Mexico, which has served as CICAD Chair for the past year, for taking the initiative by organizing a series of dialogues between October 2016 and November 2017 as a follow up to UNGASS 2016. Likewise, CICAD established a Working Group in April on the Implementation of UNGASS Recommendations – a Mexican initiative – which debated how member states had carried out efforts to disseminate the UNGASS 2016 commitments and recommendations; actions being carried out to specifically implement UNGASS 2016 recommendations, and; inter-agency dialogues taking place with academia, civil society, and other sectors for the implementation of UNGASS 2016. Mexico's concurrent chair of the CND means that it has been at the forefront of global drug policy discussion.

In closing, the Western Hemisphere has been deeply committed to the international drug policy debate, and has addressed new challenges and dynamics within the CICAD framework. As I have highlighted, the link between the five thematic areas and objectives of the Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs 2016-2020 with the seven thematic areas and operational recommendations of UNGASS 2016 is clear and strong. I would like to end by reminding you that, as a valuable forum for discussion of experiences aimed at supporting the implementation and follow up of these operational recommendations, and with a view to preparations for the 2019 CND meeting next March, CICAD will have a panel on the UNGASS process at our upcoming 64th regular session, to be held in two weeks, November 19-21, in Washington.

Thank you.