

CND 2022 Thematic Discussions

Responses not in conformity with the three international drug control conventions and not in conformity with applicable international human rights obligations pose a challenge to the implementation of joint commitments based on the principle of common and shared responsibility

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Good afternoon from Washington, D.C. and thank you, Chair.

The drug problem among member states of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD, by its Spanish language acronym), of the Organization of American States (OAS) has become an increasingly complex, dynamic, and multi-causal phenomenon that has adverse effects on health, social cohesion, citizen security, the integrity of democratic institutions, development and economic activities in the countries of the region, with political, economic, social, and environmental costs. Responding to this problem requires a comprehensive, balanced, multidisciplinary, and evidence-based approach, in full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, under the principle of common and shared responsibility, which takes into account the causes of the problem.

In 2020, OAS member states approved a new OAS Hemispheric Drug Strategy, which is supported by a corresponding Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs 2021-2025.

Through this Strategy, OAS member states recognize the importance of efforts made to address the world drug problem, including ratification and implementation of relevant international conventions, and at the same time, acknowledge the need to strengthen drug policies, strategies, and actions.

Through the updated five-year Plan, member states reiterate their commitment to placing individuals at the core of drug policies and programs, and furthering tangible progress in addressing the world drug problem within the framework of the three international drug control conventions and other relevant international instruments, in full respect of the principles of international law, the United Nations Charter, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its content takes into account gender, age, community, and cultural context. Moreover, the Plan of Action positions member states to adapt to new realities, including those emerging as a result of global crises, such as the coronavirus pandemic, which has spurred criminal activity and drug trafficking groups, while exacerbating a public health crisis. Strengthening international cooperation is more vital than ever, as countries will need to work together more closely to respond to these threats, share information, and exchange lessons learned.

The Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM), as part of the ES-CICAD, is the approved OAS mechanism to monitor and evaluate members states' application of this Strategy and associated Plan of Action with impact and evidence-based indicators, thereby strengthening national policies and actions as well as identifying the main national and regional strengths and challenges to addressing the hemispheric and world drug problem.

Specifically with regards to international cooperation, the MEM will evaluate member states' adherence to Objective 2 of the Plan of Action which calls for countries to: "Strengthen international cooperation as defined in the international legal instruments related to the world drug problem, maintaining respect for human rights."

The objective has the following four priority actions:

- 2.1 Strengthen regional and international cooperation by competent authorities to investigate and prosecute criminals on drug-related offenses.
- 2.2 Strengthen regional and international cooperation to facilitate, where appropriate, mutual legal assistance, extradition, and transfer of proceedings, in accordance with international legal instruments, when investigating and prosecuting criminals on drug-related offenses.
- 2.3 Enact national legislation and/or take administrative actions, as appropriate, to more fully implement the obligations set forth within these legal instruments.
- 2.4 Promote the accession, ratification, and implementation of the international legal instruments related to the world drug problem and related crimes.

The MEM national evaluation reports in this thematic area will be drafted during the 3rd year of this MEM cycle (2023) and approved by the CICAD Commission, before publication in December of the same year.

The MEM eighth round began in 2021 with the evaluation of the thematic area of demand reduction and national reports published in December of the same year. This year, the MEM is focused on supply reduction titled "Measures to Control and Counter the Illicit Cultivation, Production, Trafficking, and Distribution of Drugs, and to Address their Causes and Consequences."

All our reports are up on our web page at www.cicad.oas.org.

Thank you very much for your attention.