

**Opening Statement**  
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**United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention**

**Fourth National Database System**  
**User Group Meeting**  
**Vienna, 6 November 2000**

Good morning.

It is a great pleasure for me to note the increasing interest from Member States in NDS. Last year's meeting had participants from 25 governments. This year we are witnessing double the number of participating governments. Moreover, the increase is both in the actual number of users of the system and in the number of governments interested in using it.

This increase is due to several factors. First, it is the capital injection provided by the UN General Assembly. It has enabled UNDCP to fulfil the requests of Member States to enhance the system and expand its functionality. Moreover, it enabled a rapid deployment of the system to reach the number of users that we see today. Second, it is the dedication that you have exhibited towards using advanced systems for handling the complex task of drug control. Third, it is the support that the Commission on Narcotics Drugs provided for continuing this project. In March 2001 the CND adopted resolution L13. Rev.1, under implementation of the International Drug Control Treaties, which recommends States to implement NDS and urged Governments to make additional resources available for this task. Also resolution L16 requested UNDCP to make the ARQ available to Member States by use of electronic means (i.e., through NDS) and to assist member states in the collection of relevant data at the domestic level.

The Operations Branch of UNDCP, our arms in the field, has also supported this project. Today, NDS implementation activities are part of licit drug control projects in a number of several regions. To mention a few, the Licit Drug Control project in Eastern Africa, the Precursors Control Project in Central Asia and the Precursors Control Project in South Asia.

UNDCP's efforts in this direction are paralleled by the efforts of governments to customize NDS for their own use and to secure the required resources to successfully utilize the system. Furthermore, regional organizations have played a role. For example, the Organization of American States has recently established an expert group on pharmaceuticals that recommended NDS to be the standard software in the Americas for precursor control.

The culmination of all of these efforts is the NDS system that we have today. The task at hand of this user group meeting, that you are participating in today, is determining how successful we all have been in achieving the main goals of NDS.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind us all of the initial objectives:

1. Provide a comprehensive management information system for national as well as international drug control.
2. Facilitate electronic reporting by Member States to INCB
3. Facilitate electronic reporting by Member States to CND on the ARQ.
4. Facilitate exchange of drug control information among Member States on both the national and international levels.

Our success is always measured by the degree to which we have satisfied these goals. Your meeting must assess these goals and the means to continue satisfying them. It must as well decide on the means by which responsibility for the support of the system can be shared between Member States, regional organizations and UNDCP. Only through such assessment can we guarantee the continuation of the success of NDS.

Furthermore, the aforementioned capital injection provided by the General Assembly as seed funding terminates by the end of this year. UNDCP has prepared a project idea to continue supporting NDS. Funding for this project idea is only possible through earmarked funding from interested donors. The project idea is attached to the documentation of the meeting distributed to you. Your feed back on the project idea by the end of the meeting to be able to seek funding from interested donors is required.

Last but not least, I wish you a very constructive meeting.