

Drugs and Human Security in the Americas

Conclusions of the Working Meeting of Experts

San José, Costa Rica, March 28-30, 1999

SUMMARY

This report provides an analytical summary of the conclusions reached by a group of approximately one hundred experts from twenty-eight countries of the region which met in San José, Costa Rica, between March 28 and 30, 1999, at the invitation of the Foreign Affairs Minister of Canada, the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy. The group considered how current anti-drug policies and activities in the Americas could be further enhanced by relating them more closely to the pursuit of the broader policy objective of promoting human security in the hemisphere.

The group of experts paid special attention to the commitments already made by member states as part of the Plan of Action - Second Summit of the Americas (Santiago, 1998) and the Anti-Drug Strategy in the Hemisphere (OAS/CICAD). The group noted how the concept of human security could help foster the development of comprehensive, more clearly focused and better integrated responses to the problem of drugs. The human security agenda is one which can generate a useful and important dialogue between governments and civil society organizations.

The report articulates some policy issues relating to anti-drug strategies within the broader agenda of promoting human security in the Americas. It contains several suggestions and recommendations for consideration by foreign ministers during the first meeting of the newly established Foreign Ministers Dialogue Group on Drugs. The suggestions relate principally to four main policy areas which are essential to both the promotion of human security and the reduction of the harmful effects of illicit drugs: the participation of civil society; governance, the strengthening of institutional capacities and in particular the fight against corruption; international development and trade; and health and education.

In addition, suggestions are offered to remove remaining obstacles to effective international cooperation to promote human security and control the traffic of illicit drugs. Specific recommendations are also made to promote the effective implementation of existing international commitments, in particular the existing Program to Combat Corruption and the Convention against Corruption, and the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Production and Trafficking in Firearms.

INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Government launched, in the context of the Second Summit of the Americas, in April 1998 in Santiago, an initiative to create a Foreign Ministers Dialogue Group on Drugs. The purpose of the Dialogue Group is to offer foreign ministers an opportunity to consider the links between the region's drug-related problems and the broader human security needs and concerns of the peoples of the Americas.

In preparation for a first meeting of the Dialogue Group, the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Foreign Affairs Minister of Canada, requested that independent experts from civil society organizations in the Americas and from government agencies meet to discuss how current anti-drug policies and activities in the region could be enhanced by a thorough consideration of how they relate to the pursuit of the broader policy objective of promoting human security in the Americas.

A working meeting of a group of experts took place in San Jose, Costa Rica, between March 28 and 30, 1999. It was jointly organized by the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy (Vancouver, Canada), the United Nations Latin American Institute for Crime Prevention and the Treatment of Offenders (ILANUD, San Jose, Costa Rica), the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL, Ottawa), and the Nathanson Centre for the Study of Organized Crime and Corruption (Toronto). The event was funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Canada.

The meeting brought together approximately one hundred experts from 28 countries of the hemisphere.¹ They were invited to offer concrete suggestions for a fruitful dialogue by foreign ministers of the region on measures which could complement and enhance current international and regional anti-drugs efforts. They were invited to reflect on the relationship between the complex drug issues of the Americas and the more encompassing human security and good governance agenda of the region.

Clear political commitments have already been made, some of which are found in the Plan of Action - Second Summit of the Americas, the Anti-drug Strategy in the Hemisphere (OAS/CICAD), and the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem. It seemed important to attempt to delineate the links that exist between anti-drug policies and initiatives, on the one hand, and on the other some

fundamental policy objectives being pursued in the hemisphere with respect to human security, good governance, the consolidation of democratic institutions, alternative development and trade, education and health, transnational crime, including trafficking in firearms, money laundering and public corruption. It also seemed important to reflect on the vital role that can be played by communities and civil society organizations of the Americas in limiting the harm resulting from the consumption of, and the trade in, illicit drugs.

The quality and the depth of the discussions that took place during the Experts Group Meeting OD Drugs and Human Security in the Americas can be taken as a sign of how the Foreign Ministers Dialogue Groups OD Drugs can be advanced by focusing on that set of problems from a broader human security perspective. The following presents a summary of the main conclusions reached by the group of experts and offers some suggestions for consideration by foreign ministers during the first meeting of the Dialogue Group on Drugs.

THE HUMAN SECURITY FRAMEWORK

The group of experts agreed that the concept of human security offers a new, broader and potentially very fruitful way for countries of the hemisphere, and in particular foreign ministers, to enhance their collective efforts to reduce the harmful effects of drugs. This initiative must be viewed within the context of the many other initiatives already undertaken to strengthen democracy and promote human security in the Americas.

Explicit reference to the goal of promoting human security within a consultation framework on the drug problem is a major innovation. By placing the needs of citizens of the region at the centre of multilateral discussions and initiatives, the concept of human security offers a unique opportunity to foster the development of comprehensive, more clearly focused and better integrated responses to the problem of drugs. The framework may prove particularly useful by opening a new dialogue, at the regional level, between governments and civil society on how best to improve human security in the Americas.

The meeting of experts in San Jose is an example of the contribution that can be made by civil society organizations to the process. Foreign ministers should continue to promote the active contribution of civil society groups to the ministerial dialogue group on drugs through the establishment of an

appropriate consultative process.

DRUGS AS A THREAT TO HUMAN SECURITY

Drug trafficking, with the violence, corruption and other socially harmful consequences it entails, is a direct threat to human security. It also constitutes an indirect but very real threat to human security by weakening the very same governance mechanisms that are responsible for its control. It undermines the integrity and authority of state institutions and, therefore, weakens their capacity to effectively implement a program of democratic government, uphold the rule of law, and promote human security. Drug trafficking, like many other forms of organized crime can defeat social and economic development efforts. It not only substantially increases the amount of violence in society, but often also neutralizes local or national crime prevention and control strategies.

Current drug control initiatives find their main, if not only, justification in the fact that "something must be done" to protect the people whose lives are negatively affected and sometimes ruined by drugs and the violence and corruption associated with them. Notwithstanding their many other negative consequences, it is first and foremost as a threat to human security that illicit drugs deserve the huge investments that countries have been prepared to make in drug supply and demand reduction. From a policy perspective, it is essential to recognize that the drug problem is but one of the many concurrent threats to human security in the Americas

The wisdom and the effectiveness of some anti-drug efforts is often being questioned and so has the lack of attention paid to some of their unintended adverse consequences. A perfect consensus certainly did not always exist among countries of the hemisphere around the choice of methods and strategies to be employed to counter this particularly damaging threat to human security. Nevertheless, there now is a new spirit of international cooperation which makes it possible, to, not only increase the effectiveness of the current international response to the drug problem, but also better situate these efforts within the broader context of the need to respond to other equally significant threats to human security.

That "spirit of cooperation" is obvious in the principled, yet pragmatic approach which has inspired the Santiago Plan of Action. One finds therein a strong political resolve to act on many important fronts in a concerted, collaborative manner.

The Plan of Action contains several important measures for the prevention and control of illicit consumption and traffic in drugs and psychotropic substances and other related crime. More importantly, however, it adopts a body of concrete initiatives intended to promote the overall development of the countries in the hemisphere and ensure access to and improve the quality of education, promote and strengthen democracy and the respect for human rights, deepen economic integration, and eradicate poverty and discrimination. All of these measures are essential to the promotion of human security in the hemisphere and crucial to the ultimate success of drug control efforts.

A focus on human security opens new avenues for expressing that new spirit of cooperation. It can only enhance, rather than detract, current efforts to address the serious harm caused by drug consumption and trafficking.

A BALANCED RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM OF ILLICIT DRUGS

Governments of the region are committed to the pursuit of a balanced approach towards the drug problem, one which encompasses supply control and demand reduction efforts reinforcing each other. This commitment is already expressed in the Anti- drug Strategy of the Hemisphere (OAS/CICAD).

The Declaration on the Guiding Principles on Drug Demand Reduction adopted last year also recognized that, although significant progress had been achieved by governments to suppress the illicit production, trafficking and distribution of drugs, the most effective approach towards the drug problem was a comprehensive, balanced and coordinated one. To that effect, it was agreed that there was a need to intensify efforts in demand reduction and to provide adequate resources towards that end.

According to the Declaration, demand reduction programs should cover all areas of prevention, from discouraging initial use to reducing the negative health and social consequences of drug abuse. More importantly, however, efforts to reduce the demand for drugs should be fully integrated with social and public policies that influence the overall security, health and social and economic well being of people.

The success of demand reduction efforts will continue to depend on the ability of governments, individually and collectively, to address some of the social, cultural, economic and political conditions to which the root causes

of the drug problem can be traced. It is not sufficient to focus on criminalizing the behaviour of those who are prepared to exploit these conditions for their own benefit. Equally, it is not possible to continue to avoid examining and addressing the detrimental effects of some of the current supply reduction strategies from the points of view of public health, economic development, and human security.

Meeting current challenges will require comprehensive, multi-sectorial, cooperative and coordinated actions. To succeed in these efforts, governments will have to demonstrate an ability and a willingness to not only work closely together but also engage in the community-wide participatory approaches that are essential to the accurate assessment of the problem, the identification and implementation of viable solutions and strategies.

SUGGESTIONS

The Foreign Ministers Dialogue Group on Drugs is a response to the need to make a sustained collective effort to complement actions undertaken at the national level to improve the quality of life and the wellbeing of the peoples of the Americas. The effort required is considerable and the obstacles to be addressed very complex.

The group of experts welcomed the foreign ministers' initiative and agreed that it held a promise to significantly enhanced international cooperation and to contribute to a more effective response not only to the dangerous threat to human security by drugs, but to other important threats as well.

The group also urged foreign ministers to carefully consider the problem of drugs from a promotion of human security perspective. It is a perspective that encourages a careful consideration of how countries of the hemisphere can work together, while fully recognizing and respecting national sovereignty, to counter several distinct but interrelated threats to human security. Many of these human security threats are becoming increasingly transnational in nature and therefore call for an unprecedented level of international trust and cooperation. Countries of the region are becoming keenly aware of the interdependence of their own efforts to promote human security. They are conscious that the success of their own efforts to promote human security is more than ever dependent on the willingness of all national governments to work together to face these threats and limit their impact.

A focus on human security, as it relates to the problem of illicit drugs, brings the fundamental objectives behind existing drug control initiatives into a clearer focus. As human security is a matter of deep and real concern to all segments of civil society, it is a clear objective around which civil society actors can mobilize themselves throughout the hemisphere. It promotes a renewed discussion of the links to be made between domestic and foreign policies as they relate to that and other threats to human security. It reveals the need to design more effective mechanisms for the implementation of existing international commitments.

In view of the above, the following suggestions from participants in the meeting of experts are offered to foreign ministers for their consideration at the first meeting of the Foreign Ministers Dialogue Group on Drugs.

Implementation of Existing Commitments

Countries of the hemisphere have indeed made very clear political commitments with respect to drug supply and demand reduction strategies, the promotion of democracy and good governance, human and social development, economic integration and development, health and education, and the fight against corruption and organized crime, and in particular the traffic in firearms. What is perhaps not as clear, at least in the opinion of several of the experts consulted, is how these extremely complex and intimately interrelated objectives and commitments will effectively be translated into reality within a time frame that ensures their relevance to the lives of the people of the region.

Foreign ministers may wish to use the opportunity provided to them by the first meeting of the Dialogue Group on Drugs to reflect on several practical issues relating to the implementation of existing international commitments.

Drug control initiatives, in particular, have often suffered from a lack of integration with other initiatives undertaken in the pursuit of democratic development, human security, social and economic development, public participation, and institution building. In some cases, the single-minded pursuit of drug supply reduction strategies has in fact hampered the realization of other important social objectives.

The renewed political commitment to a balanced and integrated approach towards the drug problem demands that such shortsightedness be corrected.

Secondly, foreign ministers may wish to consider how recent developments, in particular the globalization of trade and communication as well as the transnationalization of law, have brought into the realm of foreign policy several areas that used to belong to the exclusive realm of national concern.

Foreign ministers are now actively involved in areas which, until recently, were the exclusive domain of other centres of responsibility at the national level. Foreign ministers could consider how they could use the strength of their own tradition of cooperation and diplomacy to facilitate and support the international dialogue that must take place between other national responsibility centres.

Finally, the development of foreign policy, at the time when it tended to be preoccupied more exclusively with issues of national security, was not particularly open to the participation of civil society. Now that so many foreign policy issues are concerned with the broader issues of human security, foreign ministers may wish to pay special attention to how civil society can be actively engaged in policy development and implementation.

Foreign policy is the result of political processes based on diplomacy, negotiations and compromises which are often insufficiently explained to the public. As a result, some national policies tend to be influenced by foreign policies development processes and international commitments in ways that do not lend themselves particularly well to the full public debate normally required by a democratic process. Public participation in the development of foreign policy is an essential element of democratic governance.

Foreign policies and initiatives concerning the drug problem, because of their huge and direct impact on the lives of the peoples of the region, should be the object of public information, debate and consultation.

Foreign ministers may wish to share with each other the experience they have acquired in this area and exchange information on successful methods of involving civil society in making these important decisions and implementing them.

Implementation of the Existing Program to Combat Corruption and of the Convention Against Corruption

Countries of the hemisphere have agreed to encourage the approval of effective and specific measures to combat all forms of corruption, bribery, and related unlawful practices. The experts noted the slow progress to date of efforts to implement the Inter-American Program to Combat Corruption and to achieve the prompt ratification of the 1996 Inter-American Convention against Corruption.

Foreign ministers may wish to review together some of the obstacles that have been met in implementing the Program and consider ways in which they could work together to remove these obstacles. They may also wish to review together the progress that has been achieved in the context of the United Nations in the development of an instrument to combat corruption within the context of the proposed new convention on transnational organized crime.

Foreign ministers may also wish to exchange information on measures that have been taken in their country to promote transparency in the origin of all contributions to electoral campaigns and, in particular, to prevent financial contributions to electoral campaigns derived from organized crime and drug trafficking. They may wish to consider what action they could take collectively to help counter this phenomenon and ensure that organized criminal groups cannot use the proceeds of their criminal activities to undermine the democratic process and defeat national efforts to deal with the drug problem. In that regard, they may wish to consider whether current efforts to prevent the laundering of the proceeds of crime are yielding the expected results.

Implementation of the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Production and Trafficking in Firearms

The Santiago Plan of Action calls for the rapid ratification and entry into force of the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Production and Trafficking in Firearms. It also promotes the approval and prompt application of the Model Regulations on the Control of Arms and Explosives Connected with Drug Trafficking.

The control and regulation of firearms transactions, ownership and use, both domestically and internationally, is a priority from the point of view of crime control, public health, social peace and human security. The group of

experts deplored the apparent lack of progress in implementing the Convention and adopting the Model Regulations. It suggested that foreign ministers make a concerted effort to clearly identify the obstacles that have been encountered in implementing these crucial measures and agree on a time frame and a strategy to ensure their prompt implementation.

In some cases, the main obstacles have been political. In others, the instruments have not been implemented due to a lack of resource., and technical expertise. It is suggested that foreign ministers establish a sufficiently funded mechanism for the provision of technical and financial assistance to requesting countries. Given the urgency of the task, it is further suggested that the Third Summit of the Americas should be established as a firm target date for the implementation of these measures by all countries of the hemisphere.

Given that countries of the hemisphere are currently participating in the development of a similar international instrument against trafficking in firearms in the context of the proposed United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, and that they will soon be expected to ratify that instrument, it is further suggested that foreign ministers establish a small working group of officials to examine the anticipated requirements of the new convention with respect to firearms trafficking and to integrate these requirements within current plans to implement the Inter-American Convention.

Finally, the current international focus on the transnational aspect of the human security threat posed by firearms, that is a focus on preventing the illicit production of and trafficking in firearms, should not obscure the need for other potentially more effective actions at the national level. In every country of the hemisphere, there are currently enough firearms legally or illegally in circulation to constitute a very real threat to human security. The experts observed that most countries in the hemisphere have a very weak domestic firearm regulation regime.

The implementation of the Inter-American Convention represents an urgent priority for action. However, international cooperation, financial and technical assistance in support of national initiatives that go beyond efforts to combat international trafficking in firearms, can also play an important role in the promotion of human security in the hemisphere and in preventing some of the harm caused by firearms.

There is clear evidence of a close interdependence between the success of national and international efforts to regulate firearms. Foreign ministers should therefore agree to extend, when possible, technical and financial assistance to requesting countries not only for the purpose of preventing the traffic in firearms, but also to support the development and implementation of effective national firearm regulation and control strategies.

The Fight Against Organized Crime

The organized crime phenomenon is evolving very rapidly. Traditional distinctions between drug trafficking and other forms of transnational criminal activities are quickly becoming obsolete. International efforts to combat the traffic in illicit drugs must be better integrated with other efforts to combat transnational organized crime and with a vigorous and broad-based focus on diverse human security threats. Otherwise, our collective response to this particularly dangerous threat to human security risks becoming even more fragmented and inefficient than it is currently.

The promotion of a comprehensive, integrated response to organized crime may eventually dictate that a review be undertaken of current law enforcement mutual assistance mechanisms. Effective actions against money laundering, along the lines adopted by the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force and other initiatives, must continue to be treated as a high priority. While action is already being taken towards enacting laws which lift financial secrecy in appropriate cases, such secrecy remains a barrier in many jurisdictions, including those that are known as "financial heavens". There are several issues which are still outstanding with respect to the promotion of successful financial investigations of matters relating to the proceeds of crime.

Many countries of the hemisphere are participating actively in the development of the proposed new United Nations Convention of Transnational Organized Crime. Implementing the proposed instrument will represent a demanding challenge for many countries of the hemisphere. Foreign ministers may wish to review how they will support together the development of the proposed Convention and prepare actively for its effective implementation.

Participation of Civil Society

The promotion of participatory democracy is part and parcel of the promotion of human security. The question of civil society's participation and of community involvement in the control of the production, traffic and consumption of illicit drugs relates to the broader issue of democratic governance. To date, the control of drugs has been left to a complex hierarchy of national and international bodies and has not included the participation of civil society.

To some extent, governments of the region, as well as the international community in general, are acquiring a new awareness of the shortcomings of such an approach to drug control and have expressed a willingness to consider new ways of dealing with the situation.

The Santiago Plan of Action attaches great importance to the promotion of the participation of civil society in debating public issues and in the development and implementation of public policies. Likewise, the United Nations Declaration of the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction acknowledges that what is required is a community-wide participatory and partnership approach to the accurate assessment of the drug problem, the identification of viable solutions and the formulation and implementation of appropriate policies and programs.

The group of experts noted that there are several different opportunities for civil society to participate in what could become a comprehensive strategy to promote human security and to address the problems associated with illicit drugs. Some of these opportunities are already being pursued actively in several countries of the hemisphere. In some cases, they are already bearing fruits, such as the "triangles of solidarity" established by the Government of Costa Rica. In most cases, however, such initiatives are still in their infancy. They also tend to meet with considerable resistance on the part of authorities who often perceive them as inconsistent with the still dominant mode of approaching the problem. There is no doubt, however, that the experience accumulated to date demonstrates the importance of making the necessary resources available to community groups and civil society organizations so that early prevention strategies and rehabilitation programs are developed to promote the successful integration of youths, particularly those suffering from drug addiction.

The ultimate purpose of such participation is to give communities and members of civil society organizations a chance to be actively involved in

the building of a peaceful and prosperous society in which the security and the rights of individuals are secured. Foreign ministers should actively promote international exchanges of information on successful practices and, in particular, on strategies and models to increase public participation in public policy development and implementation, in municipal level efforts, in local crime prevention initiatives, in drug consumption prevention and treatment strategies, and in public education initiatives.

Ministers should remain mindful of the fact that the most successful strategies are, in that regard, those that are developed and implemented at the local level and entail optimum community involvement. For that reason, the strategies outlined in the Santiago Plan of Action concerning the strengthening of municipal and regional administrations are particularly relevant. The significance of these strategies from the point of view of promoting human security, preventing crime and reducing the demand for illicit drugs is perhaps not always sufficiently understood.

The group of experts also suggested that foreign ministers should encourage their respective government to promote a more active participation of civil society in the development and the implementation of national anti-drug strategies. Measures should be taken to facilitate the widest possible dissemination of information and to guarantee access by civil society to the process of formulating and implementing anti-drug policies. In particular, attention should be given to promoting greater civil society participation in the work of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Commission (CICAD).

Governance: The Strengthening & of Institutional Capacities

The strengthening of democracies and the promotion of human security require concerted political action directed at restoring the legitimacy of political institutions, including and most importantly, electoral, justice and law enforcement institutions. In the same manner, the promotion of human security in the hemisphere requires broad-based strategies to enhance the capacity of states, independently and collectively, to address various concurrent threats to human security.

Such threats include but are not limited to those posed by the illicit drug trade and other forms of transnational crime. It is important to identify effective strategies which, although not as narrowly targeted at the control of the illicit drug trade, may nevertheless hold a greater long-term promise

for reducing the social and human harm caused by illicit drugs.

The Santiago Plan of Action recognizes that the strengthening of the state and its institution is essential to the development and consolidation of democracy in the hemisphere. It is also essential to the promotion of human security. It involves the rebuilding of a state's capacity to perform in areas that are fundamentally its responsibility, such as public safety, education, and health.

The group of experts was of the view that the capacity of social, political and legal institutions to promote human security, and to make real progress in the fight against the effects of illicit drugs, continues in many parts of the region to be hindered by the widespread corruption fueled by organized crime, a chronic lack of resources and competence, and still insufficient international cooperation.

It is wishful thinking to expect that peace, democracy, respect for human rights and human security can be nurtured without efficient and fair criminal justice institutions. There is always a huge price to be paid for ignoring human rights and human security issues. The price is insecurity, conflict and fear, which ultimately defeat whatever short term progress might be achieved in terms of economic, political or social development. Fair, credible, and efficient criminal justice systems are prerequisites to the ultimate success of whatever drug control, crime control or crime prevention initiative may be undertaken.

Widespread doubt concerning the impartiality and objectivity of the administration of justice represents a major threat to its legitimacy and efficiency. Experts noted that the high frequency of corruption-related victimization incidents reported in surveys conducted in countries of the region stood in stark contrast with the number of convictions reported in the official statistics of these same countries. The relative impunity of the culprits also affects the overall credibility of state institutions.

The problem of corruption of public officials cannot be properly addressed by a limited focus on drug-related incidents. Corrupt practices can be prevented through a variety of ways, including measures to promote transparency and accountability with respect to all transactions involving public officials. The development of code of conducts for public officials can also be useful. However, strong measures to counter the often scandalous impunity enjoyed by corrupt officials are also required in many

countries as a matter of priority and as a means of establishing the credibility of public institutions.

While feelings of vulnerability and fear of victimization are not necessarily directly related to the actual risk of victimization, there is no doubt that such feelings have reached alarming proportions in many countries. This sense of fear and powerlessness often translates itself into an increased public impatience with justice and law enforcement institutions, and in some cases with democratic institutions in general.

Examples of corruption in police forces abound, both as an organized phenomenon and as a matter of individual initiative. They contribute to a pervasive and growing public sense of insecurity. However, corruption is but one of the many reasons why justice and law enforcement institutions have, in many countries, lost most of their public credibility. That credibility cannot be restored without addressing some of the other factors that have largely destroyed it.

Gross incompetence, lack of professionalism, institutionalized and systemic discrimination against whole sectors of the population, frequent and often unpunished incidents of human rights abuses, a frequently demonstrated attitude of contempt for the rule of law and democratic institutions in general, and a general isolation from the community they serve, are all obvious reasons why law enforcement agencies have in many countries lost all semblance of credibility with the public.

The resistance of a great number of law enforcement agencies in the hemisphere, particularly those whose current level of demilitarization still remains superficial, to community-based or community-oriented models of policing is well documented. In that context, a somewhat narrow law enforcement focus on drug related problems, such as it exists in many instances or such as it is at times demanded by the international community and donor countries, can easily be perceived by the public as unduly competing with some of its own, perhaps more parochial law enforcement priorities.

A dismal public law enforcement capacity has led in many instances to the establishment of private security forces. The latter frequently outnumber the official police forces. This anomalous development, which is a sad reflection of the utter failure of the public authorities in the fulfillment of

their normal function, also represents a potential danger to democratic institutions. The monopoly of violence, which has been the privilege and one of the distinctive functions of the State for centuries, is being steadily corroded through the legalization of private police action. Moreover, some of these private security forces, which sometimes amount to small private armies, can just as easily be at the service of drug cartels or other criminal organizations.

While recognizing that the military and the 'police' may play different roles in various jurisdictions, one consequence of weak police forces is the decisive role that is being granted to the armed forces by some governments. In particular, we are seeing the military assume an unusually large role in various operations aimed at eradicating drug production and disrupting its transportation, distribution and sale. Then, there are inherent dangers in this utilization of the military. The methods traditionally employed by armed forces are better adapted to warfare than to the normal execution of police operations.

This military handling of the problem often creates grave dangers to the uninvolved civilian populations, resulting in some cases in serious violations of their human rights, including death. In this connection, it should not be forgotten that in several countries of the region, the conversion of the armed forces to civilian role is very recent. It has only partly taken place and often only under overwhelming political pressure, reinforced by implicit foreign threats of suspension of aid. The suspicion seems thus justified that such conversion is still skin-deep, more in the nature of lip service than of a real commitment to democratic values. In any cases, armed forces seem to follow exclusively a repressive strategy, and are little inclined to take other factors, such as cultural and social structures and economic realities, into account. So far, such war-like approaches, despite their elevated financial cost, have not been very successful. They also carry with them a very real risk in terms of civilian rule and basic democratic institutions.

In the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, the repression of particularly threatening forms of crime often urgently requires our attention. In fact, the crime control agenda almost always seems to carry with it an element of urgency. However, in setting our priorities for action in this field, we must guard against the possibility that we may in effect be confusing the means with the ends, what is apparently urgent with what is of greater

importance in the long term.

It would be a grave mistake to let the apparent urgency of the threat posed by drug trafficking and other forms of transnational crime lure us into believing that we can temporarily neglect the important work that is still required in order to strengthen justice and law enforcement institutions to bring them into the fold of the rule of law, make them more responsive to public concerns, and to ensure their respect for human rights.

Current efforts against drug trafficking and the proposed increased efforts to combat other dangerous forms of transnational crime are and will continue to impose a huge pressure on already over-burdened, under-resourced and ill-equipped justice systems. Now is perhaps the worst possible time of all to relax our collective, international efforts to bring these systems up to minimum standards of efficiency and to the international human rights standards already affirmed by the international community.

New and very sizable investments are required, in many countries, to bring law enforcement and justice institutions to a minimum level of effectiveness and to restore their credibility in the eyes of the population. Ironically, however, such costly investments in justice institutions are unlikely to find public support for as long as the institutions are themselves perceived as corrupt and inefficient. Furthermore, in many countries private security has, in the eyes of many and in particular in the eyes of those who can afford it, replaced public institutions as a credible solution to their feelings of insecurity. The implications of such a trend for the authority of the state and its institutions, for democracy and for human security in general could be devastating.

National law enforcement and justice agencies must first make a real contribution to human security in their own communities before they can be successfully "tested" within a wider arena. Officials cannot be recruited and brought to work closely together in effective and concerted action against transnational organized crime or drug trafficking, if they do not already have the means to function as credible, effective, publicly supported institutions at the domestic level.

Technical assistance and financial aid have tended to focus on producing short-term crime control results and to neglect the less visible elements of the justice system who are no less burdened by enhanced organized crime control initiatives. Prison overcrowding and violence. the lack of treatment

facilities for drug addicted offenders, and the near absence of effective reeducation and protection programs for children and youths who are recruited into the drug trade or other forms of crime, are but a few examples of areas that have been grossly neglected and will continue to have significant consequences for human security.

Many countries in this hemisphere are obviously dependent on foreign assistance to develop their institutions, including their law enforcement and justice institutions. In many instances, requesting countries are far more likely to receive assistance to increase their efforts against drug trafficking, money laundering, or other forms of transnational crime than they are to increase the overall capacity of their institutions to respond to local crime prevention priorities. Many countries which have in the past benefitted from foreign technical or financial assistance in the field of law enforcement and criminal justice, have often, and not always by inadvertence, been encouraged to neglect law enforcement and criminal justice activities that would have better reflected the needs and priorities of their citizens. The gap between a country's law enforcement and justice institutions and the population they purport to serve can thus widen, with negative repercussions for the credibility of these and other domestic political institutions and, ultimately, for human security.

A commitment to the promotion of human security may entail a reconsideration by all countries of the hemisphere of both, as may be the case, their development goals and strategies or their development assistance priorities. Organizations involved in international cooperation and technical assistance in the field of justice and law enforcement may also have to reconsider some of their own priorities. A clear political statement of these priorities, at the hemispheric level could provide a more precise focus for international cooperation and development assistance in this whole area.

Foreign ministers should review the conclusions reached by their colleagues, the ministers of justice, at their recent meeting in Peru, and agree to develop, in consultation with them, the parameters of a comprehensive hemispheric program to assist countries of the region in the development of effective, credible and fair justice and law enforcement institutions.

Alternative Development and Trade

Alternative development is a policy measure which addresses some of the main underlying causes and contributing factors of drug production. Alternative development is seen primarily as a supply reduction strategy in anti-drug programs. Its objective is to promote conditions which would discourage the production of illicit crops, and to encourage the pursuit of alternative livelihoods for the people of the affected region. Over the long term, sound alternative development strategies can help restore social, economic and political stability in areas which have been afflicted by the harmful consequences of drug production.

If human security is conceived as the security needs of the individual, alternative development is related to the individual's need for economic security, environmental security, personal security and overall human development. By promoting strategies which are designed to foster the production of licit crops, successful long-term alternative development strategies can diminish the distortion of local economies, reduce the threat from violence and crime, act as anti-corruption incentives, and promote better land use, agricultural policies and environmental management.

Alternative Development has been recognized as a sound policy response in two recent multilateral documents: the 1996 Hemispheric Anti-Drug Strategy of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) and the 1998 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem. These two statements commit governments of the world and of the hemisphere to work internationally and domestically to promote lawful, viable and sustainable economic options that will cause a reduction in the supply of illicit drugs.

The group of experts noted that some of the obstacles to successful alternative developments are already well known. In particular, it was noted that alternative development strategies should not be perceived as mere palliative measures, but should be integrated fully within the countries' overall development plan and national strategies. There are profound limitations to development strategies that are too narrowly, or even perceived to be narrowly, driven by drug supply reduction initiatives. Inter-sectorial coordination of development activities will continue to be a pre-condition to their eventual success.

The group of experts emphasized that foreign ministers must continue to examine the consequences of negotiated trade agreements and economic

integration policies, such as those encouraged in the Santiago Plan of Action. from the point of view of their impact on poor countries. There is a need to find a way to attract economic investments to poor countries in order to lead to realistic alternative development initiatives. Without access to markets for legitimate commodities that can be exported by these countries, drug production will remain a popular approach to economic development and will continue to be pervasive.

Trade ministers should be encouraged to consider the viability of alternative development programs and the issue of market access for goods produced through such programs, in the context of international trade negotiations for a Free Trade Area of the Americas, the World Trade Organization Millennium Round, and sub-regional trade arrangements. Specifically, the possibility of including potential preferential treatments and market access for countries still dependent on illicit crops should receive special consideration.

Alternative development programs are not possible without substantial financial support. International financial institutions and donor countries must be strongly encouraged to increase funding for such programs. National governments must also be prepared to redirect some of their own resources to develop the necessary fiscal, management and physical infrastructure for successful and sustainable alternative development programs. In that regard, the recent experience of the Peru Consultative Group Meeting on Alternative Development, which received assistance from the Inter-American Development Bank and generated funding for an alternative development strategy in Peru, could provide a model for other countries.

Health and Education

The human security paradigm dictates that we adopt broad-based, holistic approaches to the problem of drugs and, within such approaches, public health strategies, the creation of accessible health services, and the provision of accessible quality education will necessarily occupy prominent places.

The group of experts readily recognized that the implementation of vigorous strategies to improve the levels of public health and public education, and in particular to improve access to health and education services is a prerequisite to ensuring human security and reducing the demand for drugs.

While specific public information and education programs, as part of a drug demand reduction strategy, will remain important, their success remains precarious as long as they are not integrated within broader public education and access to education strategies. It is unlikely that public education programs designed specifically to reduce the demand for drugs will have the desired impact unless they are part of a broader strategy. Elements of such a broad strategy can already be found in the Santiago Plan of Action which promotes access to and a greater quality of education for all.

From the point of view of human security, as well as from the point of view of drug control, it is essential that the objectives set out in the Santiago Plan of Action in the area of education and health be accomplished and that the targets dates for meeting such objectives be met.

There are several ways in which illicit drugs, their production, their consumption and even their eradication can exacerbate various public health hazards and have an impact on the environment that may last for generations. However, none of these problems that are associated with these process and policies can be successfully addressed without the presence of adequate and accessible public health services.

Even where health services exist, it must be remembered that current drug control policies have often resulted in the marginalization of whole sectors of society, and among them a very large number of women and children. Access to existing services and, specifically, access without fear of repression and other adverse consequences must be ensured to all before the demand for drugs is effectively reduced and important human security objectives are met.

In almost all countries of the region, greater efforts and significant investments are required to establish widely accessible, community based, addiction prevention and drug treatment programs.

As a result of current drug prohibition strategies, an increasingly large numbers of people, and in particular young people, find themselves incarcerated in prisons for long periods of time. The health problems which exist in correctional institutions are particularly significant. They also represent a significant threat to public health in general. Yet, in most parts of the region, there are no adequate drug addiction treatment or other health services available to inmates. The solution to the problem lies only

partly in the provision of treatment programs for prisoners. There are several much deeper issues of sentencing and correctional reform which must be addressed as a matter of priority. These include the over-reliance on incarceration, the lack of meaningful alternatives to prisons, the lack of education and rehabilitation programs to allow individual offenders to reinstate themselves as active and productive members of society. As long as prison populations continue to be marginalized and prevented from successfully reintegrating society, there will be significant and dangerous segments of the population which will continue to be dependent upon crime, the supply of illicit commodities, and violence. Unfortunately, these issues continue to be neglected in most part of the hemisphere as their immediate relevance to public health, drug control and human security in general is still very poorly understood.

Obstacles to International Cooperation

The group of experts noted how fragile and complex international cooperation really in most instances. When it comes to international efforts to promote human security, countries are faced with the practical obligation to collaborate and work closely together in areas that used to fall until recently within the exclusive jurisdiction of national governments. Issues relating to the exercise of the usual prerogatives of national sovereignty often arise. Policies and initiatives of a jurisdiction, however sound they may be from a national perspective, often have unintended and detrimental consequences for other countries.

The group of experts believed that the Foreign Ministers Dialogue Group will be in a good position to identify and, if possible, to address, some of the issues which arise from time to time and weaken the existing spirit of international cooperation. In that way, foreign ministers can contribute in a practical way to the strengthening of the international cooperation required to meet today's threats to human security.

Many of the experts present at the San Jose meeting were of the view that foreign ministers should seize the opportunity offered by the first meeting of the Dialogue Group on Drugs to examine the question of the impact of certain deportation practices. Foreign ministers should engage in a effort to identify a better way for countries of the region to deal with disruptive instances of criminal deportation, especially from the United States, Canada and Europe, to developing countries. The latter often do not have the means to deal with these potentially dangerous and usually disruptive

individuals. Although some deportation practices are understandable from the point of view of the deporting country, they can nevertheless have devastating effects on the receiving country. Human security is often affected by such practices, as appears to be the case in several Caribbean countries.

The group of experts suggested that foreign ministers discuss an agenda for multi-lateral research, cooperation and technical assistance to address the impact of criminally involved deportees on deporting and receiving countries, as a basis for an hemispheric action plan on deportee classification, cooperation, information sharing and technical assistance.

Evaluation and Research

The United Nations Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction states that demand reduction programs should be based on a regular assessment of the nature and magnitude of drug use and abuse and drug related problems in the population. This according to the Declaration, is imperative for the identification of any emerging trends. The Declaration also stresses the importance of thoroughly evaluating the impact of demand reduction strategies to improve their effectiveness. The results of these evaluations should be shared with all those interested.

The group of experts was encouraged by the recent progress achieved in the context of CICAD to develop a single multilateral evaluation mechanism (MEM). In particular, they noted the great potential that this new mechanism holds for promoting mutual confidence and increased cooperation among countries.

It was pointed out, however, that several other forms of evaluation and research are also required to inform, and if required, redirect current initiatives to promote human security and to counter the effects of the illicit drug trade. It was suggested that foreign ministers may wish to consider the advisability of developing a joint strategy to support the conduct of comparative research in the areas of human security, drug demand reduction initiatives, and alternative development programs.

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