

QUITO DECLARATION

II MINISTERIAL MEETING ON THE WORLD DRUG PROBLEM OF THE COMMUNITY OF LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN STATES - CELAC -

**QUITO, ECUADOR
May 21st and 22nd, 2015**

The Ministers and officials from governing institutions in the field of drugs of the Community of Latin American and the Caribbean States (CELAC), meeting in Quito, Ecuador, on the occasion of the Second Ministerial Meeting on the global drug problem, on the 21st and 22nd of May, 2015.

Taking as a reference the Special Declaration on the world drug problem, adopted at the Summit of Heads of State and Government of CELAC, meeting in Belen, Costa Rica, on January 28th and 29th, 2015.

Expressing concern about the impact on the health of populations, the democratic institutions, the serious economic and social implications, as a consequence of the world drug problem. Therefore, we consider it necessary to continue to strengthen international cooperation and exchange of good practices, promoting and encouraging integral policies on the subject.

Recognizing the need to improve the capacity of States to incorporate in their strategies prevention, detection and punishment of organized crime dedicated to the activities of drug trafficking and related crimes using, among others, intimidation, corruption and violence.

Recognizing that social, cultural and economic plurality of the countries of the region should allow the formulation of various comprehensive and integrated policies in the framework of the UN Conventions and other relevant international instruments.

Recognizing the special geographic concern of the small Caribbean island states.

Recognizing that, in order to address the new challenges posed by the world drug problem, it is necessary to enrich the answers to this phenomenon the scope of United Nations.

Emphasizing that the efforts of the States in terms of reducing the impact generated by organized criminal groups must continue complementing, additionally, with policies focused on the welfare of citizens and respect for international instruments on human rights, protection of nature and the environment.

Recognizing the need to prioritize preventive measures to address the world drug problem in order to strengthen the social fabric and well-being of the people. In this sense, joint actions must be coordinated between control and comprehensive prevention.

Valuing the efforts made by the region, through the coordination of anti-money laundering policies, the control of chemical precursors, and border, land, sea and air controls.

Recognizing that the framework of the Conventions allows the States to develop their own drug policies to address the problem. This process should be conducted in accordance with international law and the sovereign jurisdiction of States.

Inspired by the principle of unity in diversity,

DECLARE

That is necessary to continue contributing to the strengthening of technical and political bodies, specific for the Latin American and Caribbean region, on drugs and psychotropic substances.

That It becomes imperative to have a consensus-based vision of CELAC at the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem UNGASS 2016, to be held in New York, around the following elements:

That all drug policies should include, in a comprehensive manner, the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in accordance with the spirit and objective of safeguarding the health and welfare of humanity, within the framework of the three conventions of United Nations on Drugs, according to the United Nations Charter and other relevant international instruments on this matter, respecting the sovereign decisions of States.

Intensify joint efforts to understand and tackle the structural causes of the global drug problem.

Reaffirm the commitments to prevent and reverse the social damage caused by the world drug problem.

Encourage the development of synergies with all social sectors for the implementation of efficient responses to the global drug problem that strengthen social cohesion and participation.

That the States are fully entitled to make their drug policies based on the recognition of their own economic, cultural, historical, social and geopolitical realities, while fully respecting their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

To continue to develop, within the framework of the United Nations, drug policies and measures that focus on the human being, taking into account the inalienable rights of individuals and the protection of nature, to advance in integrated, balanced and multidisciplinary approaches, to reduce supply and demand of drugs, as well as preventing its causes and reduce the negative consequences of this socioeconomic phenomenon.

Promote the generation and exchange of scientific evidence that contribute to the work of the relevant United Nations organs on the inclusion or elimination of substances in the list of international control.

Recall the provisions of the Special Declaration on the coca leaf signed by the heads of State of Latin America and the Caribbean in Havana, Cuba during January 28th and 29th, 2014.

Recognize that drug abuse is a public health problem and its extreme manifestation, dependence or addiction, require addressing this socioeconomic and cultural phenomenon through the

implementation of comprehensive care policies and social inclusion, according to the national legislations.

Promote joint actions to identify and combat organized criminal groups involved in drug trafficking, to develop comprehensive capabilities to meet the challenges that arise in our societies.

That, in the framework of the Special Declaration on small developing Island States accorded in Costa Rica, at the Third Summit of CELAC, which recognizes their unique needs, these States face geographical concerns so, in the application of the principle of common and shared responsibility, their special needs and vulnerability should be recognized at the level of regional and international drugs policies.

Ensure, in accordance with national legislation, provided no impunity is generated, the development of alternative measures in the administration of justice, consistent with United Nations conventions on drugs and the international law.

That CELAC Member States shall consider the contributions of all the bodies of the United Nations system, other international organizations, civil society, academia, policymakers and other stakeholders, as appropriate under the process towards UNGASS 2016.

Consider as a State policy, according to the different national realities, a set of measures to enhance the incorporation of the community, with a territorial approach, in productive, socioeconomic and environmental protection projects and programs, to reduce the likelihood of their involvement in illicit drug-related activities and promote integral human development, including sustainable alternative, integral development, including preventive, as appropriate.

Thank the Government of Ecuador, the Pro Tempore Presidency of CELAC and their competent authorities on drugs, for organizing and coordinating the Second Ministerial Meeting on the World Drug Problem, held in Quito, on May 21st and 22nd, 2015, while greeting the Dominican Republic for hosting the Third Ministerial Meeting on the World Drug Problem in the scope UNGASS 2016.