

# ***The International Task Force on Strategic Drug Policy***

## ***The Guayaquil Resolution 2008***

*Acknowledging* the efforts made by Member States, as well as international and regional organisations, in adopting measures to combat the demand for and supply of illegal drugs and other drugs of abuse (*where drug abuse is herein defined as any use of illegal substances and the inappropriate use of legal substances*),

*Recognising* that most Member States of the United Nations are dedicated to the global fight against drug abuse,

*Recalling* the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the provisions of the 2005 World Summit Outcome addressing the world drug problem, its resolution 61/183 of 20 December 2006 and its resolutions,

*Endorsing* the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session and the importance of meeting the objectives targeted for 2009,

*Recognising also* the joint ministerial statement adopted at the ministerial segment of the forty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction and the Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development, adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session,

*Recognising* the work of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) as a positive and fundamentally essential body in international drug demand and supply reduction and, further,

*Noting* that the INCB, in its 1993 report, stressed drug demand reduction activities as having paramount importance in international drug policy,

*Noting also* that the INCB specifically, and rightly, stated that, “‘harm reduction’ programmes are not substitutes for demand reduction programmes,”

*Recognising* with concern that harm reduction is too often a euphemism for drug legalization or other inappropriate relaxation efforts, a policy approach that violates UN treaties and documents on drug policy,

*Noting* that in multiple reports the INCB has denounced so-called ‘medical marijuana’ policies, and has said that they “contravene the international drug control treaties,”

*Recognising* that the INCB, in its 1992 report and in subsequent reports, has rejected policies of legalisation, writing that such policies “do not withstand critical evaluation and...tend to run contrary to general experience,”

*Noting* that programs which facilitate drug abuse and drug trafficking perpetuate the violation of human rights among the most vulnerable individuals, those whose free will has been compromised by addiction,

*Acknowledging* that there has been an increase in advocacy work which has resulted in influencing funding and policy and legislation changes which support drug demand reduction and interdiction efforts,

*Recalling* that NGOs have accomplished solid, evidence-based, culturally appropriate, effective prevention, treatment and recovery practices and outcomes,

*Noting* that while NGOs are sometimes consulted by governments, there is often little follow-up,

*Acknowledging* however that while NGOs with expertise and credibility should be consulted by governments, many interest groups conducting activities counter to UN objectives should not necessarily expect to be consulted by governments,

*Recognising* that the process to gain consultative status can be cumbersome, and that general communication with UN bodies and delegations is lacking among NGOs and should be improved,

*Recognising* also that NGOs have increased their effectiveness by the building of alliances between NGOs at international, national and regional levels since 1998, the International Task Force on Strategic Drug Policy now:

1. *Concludes and Asserts* that while improvement to individual policies can always be considered, the UN Conventions have been a valuable tool for the many regional drug demand and supply successes of the past thirty years,
2. *Resolves* that a balanced policy of prevention, education, treatment, law enforcement, research, and supply reduction provides the most effective pillars of reduction in drug abuse and associated harms,
3. *Resolves* also that legalisation under any name or in any form would only serve to exacerbate the global drug problem,
4. *Concludes and Asserts* that all people and communities have the right to expect governments to protect them from drug abuse and have a life free of drug abuse; and, in particular, parents, families, and other caregivers have the right to expect governments to support their efforts to help their loved ones remain free of drug abuse,
5. *And finally resolves* that NGOs should work with governments to strengthen, support, and encourage the UN system of drug control, including its ancillary bodies of the Office of Drugs and Crime, International Narcotics Control Board, Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Economic and Social Council, World Health Organization, and other bodies, in order to reduce the global demand and supply of illicit drugs.

Resolved this day, 20th of June 2008

In Guayaquil, Ecuador

And passed unanimously by the assembled Task Force