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**Twenty-seventh Meeting of Heads of
National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies,
Latin America and the Caribbean**
Guatemala City, 2-6 October 2017

Draft report

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Addendum

Consideration of topics by working groups

(a) Coordinating the regional communication platforms supporting drug law enforcement across Latin America and the Caribbean

The working group on the above topic met during the third and fourth meetings, held on 3 October 2017. In its consideration of the topic in question, the working group formulated the following observations:

1. The transport of large volumes of illicit drugs and precursor chemicals by sea remains a primary modus operandi of trafficking groups, whilst the expansion, affordability and reach of international air transport is increasing the opportunities of traffickers to employ couriers to transport drugs out of the region.
2. The effectiveness of border controls is enhanced significantly when law enforcement agencies combine their professional skills, share information and are encouraged to work operationally together.
3. Small arms trafficking in the region is on the increase and criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking are exposing civil society and law enforcement authorities to increasing levels of harm and violence through their use of firearms to protect themselves and their illicitly trafficked drugs.
4. National and regional communication platforms, bilateral cooperation agreements between States and the services of international agencies (e.g. AMERIPOL, CARICOM-IMPACTS, INTERPOL, WCO) exist across the region that support authorities in the secure sharing of information related to illicit drug trafficking and related offences.

* Available only in English, French and Spanish, which are the working languages of the subsidiary body.



The working group drew up the following conclusions:

1. Building trust between agencies is an essential first step to establishing good communication and cooperation.
2. Successfully developing multi-agency response teams to address illicit trafficking and related offences is difficult, demanding but ultimately very effective when the combined professional skills, resources and legislative powers of each participating authority are unified.
3. More must be done to address the flow of trafficked firearms into the region.
4. Authorities should make full use of the national, regional and international communication platforms available throughout the region to share information related to combatting illicit trafficking and encourage their staff to make use of these services.

The working group adopted the following recommendations:

1. Governments of the region should be encouraged to support inter-agency responses to addressing illicit drug trafficking and related offences.
 2. Governments are encouraged to support international initiatives such as the UNODC AIRCOP and Container Control Programmes that lead to better border management strategies and develop stronger interdiction measures.
 3. Governments are encouraged to provide adequate and targeted training to law enforcement, Customs and border control authorities in combating trafficking in illicit firearms.
 4. Governments should take steps to encourage their authorities make full use of the communication platforms available across the region for the timely sharing of information related to trafficking offences and the expeditious gathering of evidence against offenders.
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