

*The National Drug Control Program is a special program under the terms stipulated by the Law on Planning. Diverse sectors of the federal government are committed to it, state authorities are encouraged to participate, and society at large is expected to cooperate, in accordance with three fundamental principles: the preservation of the general health of all Mexicans; the defense of Mexico's sovereignty and security, and the reinforcement of Mexico's solidarity with the international community.*

### Diagnosis

Drug consumption and the drug trade persist because of the huge profits from its illicit commerce and the negative evolution of some of society's traditional values.

Moreover, drug traffickers have proven themselves highly skilful in eluding any kind of control, quickly adjusting their operations and marketing procedures, as well as the addicts' patterns of consumption.

Another fundamental part of the international problem is the steady rise of supply. Its network being changed by the search for new markets and the strengthening of areas of production and illicit methods of traffic.

From the Mexican point of view, this reality creates, first of all, a need to reinforce the prevention of drug consumption in Mexico and, second, underscores the universality of the problem, thereby impeding isolated or unilateral attention.

### Demand

In 1988, the health sector carried out its National Survey on Addiction. According to its findings, 4.8 percent of the urban population between the ages of 12 and 65 has used marijuana, drugs, sedatives, stimulants, inhalants or other drugs at least once or more times.

Marijuana is the most commonly used drug, followed by tranquilizers and inhalants, while other substances

# National Drug Control Program: 1989-1994

registered notoriously low percentages.

Northwestern Mexico, specifically Baja California, Baja California Sur, Sonora and Sinaloa, followed by the northern border area and the main tourist areas are at the greatest risk of consuming derivatives. University students were identified as the group at the highest risk of consuming marijuana and amphetamines.

Inhalable substances are used by very underprivileged minors, while heroin or cocaine consumption is related to youths that have worked or lived in the U.S.

By age group and sex, men, in particular, use marijuana and inhalants,

while women use medical drugs. Both male and female users fall primarily into the younger groups, 12-17 years of age.

Consumption of inhalable solvents and cocaine has risen over the last ten years, while the use of marijuana and psychotropic medicines has remained stable.

### Production

Marijuana, opium gum and crude heroin are all produced on Mexican territory. Marijuana's characteristics lend themselves to cultivation almost anywhere in Mexico.

Poppies are produced on the Pacific coast in places where the Western Sierra Madre mountains are

at their highest. Crude laboratories for transforming it into heroin are usually associated with the areas of cultivation.

**Traffic**

The U.S. is one of the world's largest consumers of illicit drugs, with dangerous repercussions for Mexico, since the two share almost three thousand kilometers of border.

Other factors can be added to this proximity, such as the marginal existence of campesino groups, the fact that weather and orographic conditions favor cultivation and traffic, and protecting its clandestine nature, in addition to the great profits to be had from it. These reasons make Mexico's territory attractive for drug routes habitually used by traffickers.

**Prevention**

The Mexican government believes that prevention is the most efficient way to impede crimes against the people's health and, therefore, maintain healthy conditions overall.

Education is one of the best ways to solve the serious problems of psychotropic and other drug consumption, especially for the long term. The latest findings on these important issues should be used.

In Mexico, we are attempting to erect a cultural barrier to protect society from drugs: a culture for life, a type of education that rids us of the causes of drug consumption, as well as the counterculture representing and glorifying them.

The efforts of diverse federal government dependencies should be pointed out:

**Health Sector.** An epidemiological watchdog system has been worked out. The goal is to keep us informed on demand for and consumption of drugs. It has produced television programs and audiovisual materials on basic aspects of the prevention and treatment of addiction, as well as

participating in youth programs promoting all-around development. At the same time, Mexican social security institutes have provided people with information, training and rehabilitation, as well as the means to detect problems of addiction in the home and work place.

**Education.** This sector has informed, oriented and trained teachers, parents, technicians and professionals by means of a program on preventing addiction, so they can distribute the information among their students and children.

**Department of the Federal District.** It has implemented a program mobilizing communities against drug use. It provides information, training and recreation, and promotes treatment and rehabilitation centers that provide information and counsel addicts.

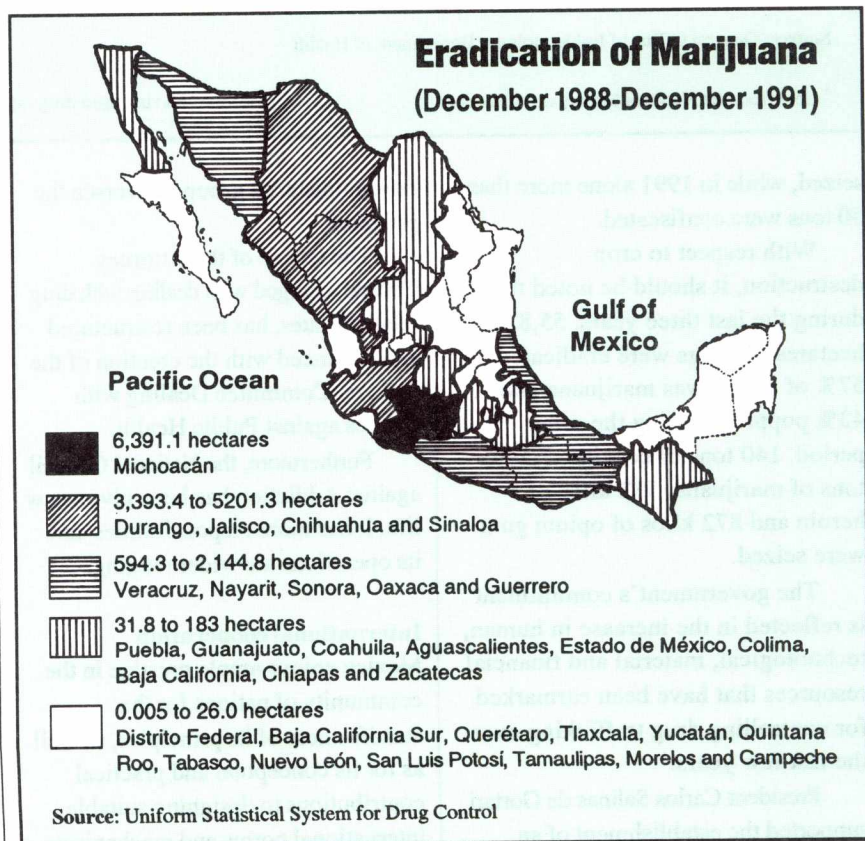
**National System for the Integral Development of the Family (DIF).** It has developed an integral youth program, offering them better alternatives for protecting their health, and supporting an anti-drug attitude.

Diverse organizations, such as the Centers for Juvenile Integration, in addition to charitable and social organizations, are helping with rehabilitation services and treatment for children and youths with drug related problems.

**Crimes against public health**

The most important and consistent results have been obtained in the last three years, during which 71% of the cocaine was seized, 60% of the heroin and opium gum, and 51% of the marijuana.

Cocaine trafficking has skyrocketed during the last decade. In 1983, 650 kilos of this substance were



### Drug consumption in Mexico<sup>1</sup>

| Users <sup>2</sup>               | Marijuana            | Tranquillizers        | Inhalants             | Amphetamines          | Narcotic analgesics   | Cocaine               | Heroin drug          | Any                   |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Total                            | 388,000              | 132,500               | 113,000               | 129,000               | 21,000                | 44,000                | 18,000               | 692,500               |
| Prevalence (%)                   | 1.08                 | 0.37                  | 0.31                  | 0.36                  | 0.06                  | 0.12                  | 0.05                 | 1.92                  |
| Region with most consumption (%) | I: 23.30<br>V: 17.96 | II: 25.44<br>V: 21.18 | IV: 30.06<br>I: 14.61 | V: 35.72<br>VI: 21.31 | V: 64.79<br>IV: 12.31 | IV: 37.13<br>I: 30.93 | II: 72.3<br>I: 25.57 | V: 21.38<br>VII: 8.25 |
| Sex: Men<br>Women                | 98.70<br>1.30        | 54.54<br>45.46        | 99.50<br>0.50         | 45.56<br>54.44        | 64.68<br>35.32        | 100.00<br>0.00        | 100.00<br>0.00       | 79.57<br>20.43        |
| Risk group (starting age)        | 12-17                | 18-25                 | 12-17                 | 18-25                 | 18-25                 | 12-17                 | 12-17                |                       |

\* Percentage of the total population

\*\* Region

\*\*\* Percentages of total users of each drug

I: Northwest: Baja California, Baja California Sur, Sonora and Sinaloa

II: Northeast: Coahuila, Chihuahua, Durango, Nuevo León, San Luis Potosí and Tamaulipas

III: North Central: Aguascalientes, Colima, Jalisco, Nayarit and Zacatecas

IV: Mexico City: Distrito Federal

V: Center: Hidalgo, Guanajuato, Estado de México, Morelos, Puebla, Tlaxcala and Querétaro

VI: Center South: Guerrero, Michoacán, Oaxaca and Veracruz  
VII: South: Campeche, Chiapas, Quintana Roo, Tabasco and Yucatán

Source: General Office of Epidemiology, Department of Health

<sup>1</sup> Data from the National Survey on Addiction.

<sup>2</sup> Having used drugs six times or more.

seized, while in 1991 alone more than 50 tons were confiscated.

With respect to crop destruction, it should be noted that, during the last three years, 55,823 hectares of drugs were eradicated, 57% of which was marijuana and 43% poppies. During the same period, 140 tons of cocaine, 1,586 tons of marijuana, 532 kilos of heroin and 872 kilos of opium gum were seized.

The government's commitment is reflected in the increase in human, technological, material and financial resources that have been earmarked for controlling drug trafficking over the last few years.

President Carlos Salinas de Gortari supported the establishment of an

inter-ministerial group to oversee the program.

The Office of the Attorney General, charged with dealing with drug related issues, has been restructured and enhanced with the creation of the General Committee Dealing with Crimes against Public Health.

Furthermore, the National Council against Addiction has been given new life. It has more responsibilities and its operations are wider ranging.

#### International cooperation

Mexico enjoys ample prestige in the community of nations for the steadfastness of its principles, as well as for its conceptual and practical contributions to designing suitable international norms and mechanisms.

Based on full respect for the efforts made by each country, Mexico has coordinated multilateral efforts and has extended ties of regional and bilateral cooperation.

Its participation in the Narcotics Commission of the U.N. Economic and Social Council and in its subsidiary bodies has been noteworthy. Moreover, Mexico has contributed to the UN Fund for Drug Abuse Control, as well as to the OAS Inter-American Commission for the Control of Drug Abuse, which it currently heads.

The Mexican government has supported bilateral action, signing related agreements with countries in the Americas and Europe, especially such neighboring countries as the U.S., Belize and Guatemala. It has

worked out plans with them for land, sea and air border interception. With Belize and Guatemala, in particular, it has encouraged the Program for Strengthening Legality on the Southern Border. On the U.S. border, it has implemented a bilateral epidemiological watchdog system for addictions.

### Program objectives and implementation

The overall goal of the Program on Drug Control is to reduce drug dependency, as well as illicit production, processing, trafficking and distribution of psychotropic and other drugs. It serves as an overall focus, promoting a reduction in demand and reducing the supply of such drugs through preventive, dissuasive and judicial-penal actions

and through community and international participation.

It serves as the federal government's working guideline on drug-related problems. Solving this complex phenomenon requires not only government participation at all levels, but also a coordinated effort and the participation of parents, teachers, business leaders, academicians and intellectuals, as well as of social organizations.

It is up to the head of the federal Executive to take the appropriate decisions. The president created a special task force to coordinate the program within the national security cabinet.

This group is made up basically of the Departments of the Interior, Foreign Relations, National Defense, Navy, Finance and Public Credit,

Agriculture and Water Resources, Public Education, Communications and Transport, and Health, as well as the Office of the Attorney General.

The latter agency, through its General Office for Attention to Crimes against Public Health, is acting as a Technical Secretariat, coordinating the implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the special task-force's programs and agreements.

Starting in March 1991, with the goal of duly coordinating information on drug trafficking, the Planning Center for Drug Control (CENDRO) was set up. It is an inter-departmental group effectively interrelating the agencies involved in controlling drugs and exchanging information on a permanent and timely basis. CENDRO's operations will make it possible to plan and effectively

## II Regional Anti-Drug Summit

**T**he II Regional Anti-Drug Summit was held on February 27th in San Antonio, Texas, to draw up strategies against drug production and trafficking. Present at the meeting were Bolivian president, Jaime Paz Zamora, Colombian president César Gaviria; Ecuadorian president Rodrigo Borja, Mexican president Carlos Salinas de Gortari; Peruvian president, Alberto Fujimori; Venezuelan foreign minister Armando Durán, and U.S. president George Bush who also hosted the event.

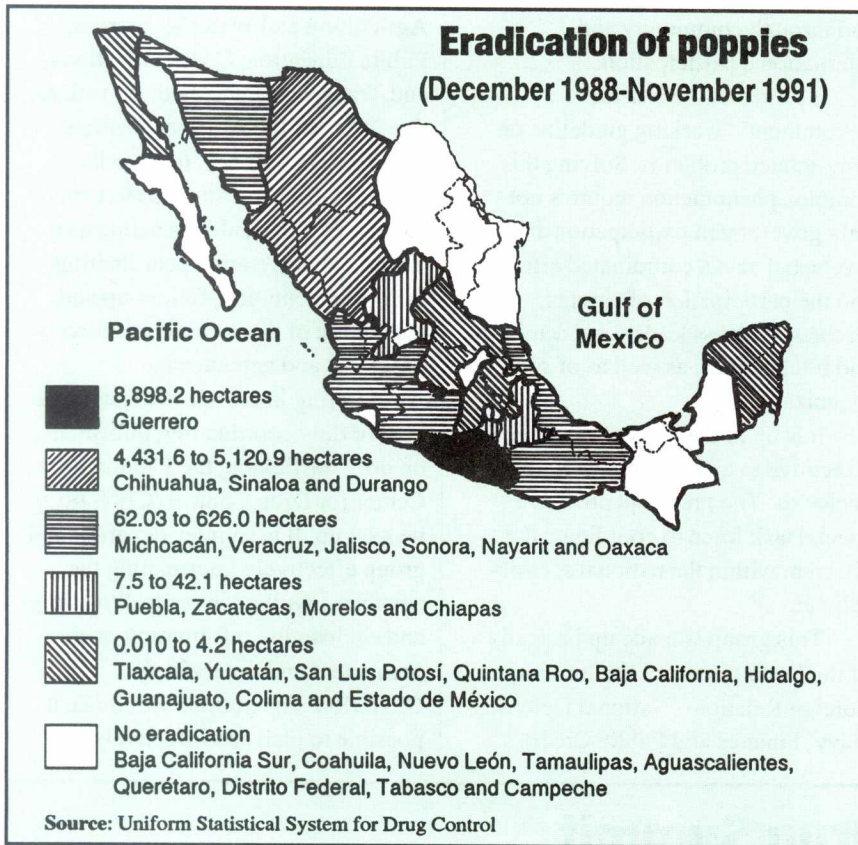
In the joint declaration, participants expressed satisfaction at the progress achieved over the last few years in decreasing cocaine production and demand, enforcing alternative development programs, and dismantling international financial networks linked to the drug-trade.

The meeting resulted in the creation of 14 drug control strategies and the reinforcement of judicial systems in the areas of training, information exchange, airspace and aircraft control, air and maritime operations; inspection of land transport systems; and investigations into the trade of drug-processing chemicals.

Participation in the anti-drug war was also proposed for European and Asian nations, particularly Japan, as well as for international financial institutions like the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the OAS and the Commercial Organization for Development.

During the inaugural ceremony, president Bush pointed out the need to combine anti-drug campaigns with programs of economic aid for drug-producing nations. He asserted that all attempts to halt the production and trafficking of narcotics were insufficient if demand could not be reduced, and recognized that this responsibility fell largely on his country.

Mexican president Carlos Salinas de Gortari referred to the importance of maintaining respect for national laws and sovereignty in any international cooperation against drugs. He also mentioned the link between abject poverty and drug production, and stressed that any preventive measures should take broad modernization and economic development programs into consideration. Dwelling on the same theme, Peruvian president Alberto Fujimori, protested against recent foot dragging over the delivery of funds in support of alternative preventive programs.



### Conclusion

The national program gathers, synthesizes and sifts through years of drug control experience in Mexico. It lends order, methodology and universality to recent experiences. It brings in contemporary thinking and, along with it, ways of working that are more socially oriented, more advanced technologically, better coordinating the numerous government departments involved and taking advantage of the wide-ranging possibilities offered by international cooperation.

The plan does not purport to be a finished product, but rather a general and original approach to be kept up-to-date. It is, therefore, the synthesis of Mexico's experience, the accumulation and ordering of bold ideas, but, above all, the commitment of the entire Mexican nation to its younger generations **M**

coordinate the efforts of the Mexican Government and its various levels dealing with drug problems. This will lead to more efficient results, rationalization of efforts and joint resources, as well as increasing the ability to anticipate the perpetration of crimes, thereby improving the traditional pattern of reactive investigation.

The Uniform Statistical System for Drug Control (SEUCD) was set up in 1991. The National System on Information and Documentation on Drugs (SINID) will eventually be linked to it, permitting exchange of information on diverse aspects of drugs, as well as the actions taken by institutions involved.

There is also a Hemispheric System of Information on Drug Control (SHICOD) comprising an intelligence network to combat of drug trafficking on a continental level. The Mexican government has supported the establishment of this network and has joined it through CENDRO.

