



ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE CONTROL COMMISSION

cicad

FORTY SECOND REGULAR SESSION
November 27 - 30, 2007
Santa Marta, Colombia

OEA/Ser.LJ/XIV.2.42
CICAD/doc.1617/07
21 November 2007
Original: English

NATIONAL ANTI-DRUG STRATEGY

Department of Justice
Canada

GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

S E R V I N G C A N A D I A N S



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

National Anti-Drug Strategy

Presentation to



Drug Problems in Canada

- Substance abuse among youth is increasing, the average age of first drug use is getting younger, reported incidents of drug offences involving youth have steadily increased, and youth drug use is a priority concern voiced by communities.
- Canada lacks treatment capacity for addicted youth and adults and innovative approaches, such as drug courts, for those who pose a risk to the community are too limited.
- Illicit production and distribution of marijuana and synthetic drugs, the emergence of grow-ops and clandestine labs in residential neighbourhoods, as well as the diversion of precursor chemicals, have all been identified as serious issues for Canada.
- Penalties given for serious drug crime have also been criticized and there are gaps in federal legislation and enforcement capacity.



New Approach

- Canada's Drug Strategy (CDS), renewed in 2003, addressed a broad range of substance abuse, including illicit drugs, pharmaceuticals and alcohol, through activities in 4 areas: Prevention, Enforcement, Treatment and Harm Reduction (\$385 million per year).
- The current government which was elected in January 2006 committed to a new National Anti-Drug Strategy (NADS) with a particular emphasis on youth.
- The government's 2007 Budget allocated \$63.8 million over two years to build on existing programs and initiatives (\$385 million per year) that are being refocused to create a new National Anti-Drug Strategy
- The National Anti-Drug Strategy was formally announced by the Prime Minister on October 4, 2007 and is currently being implemented.



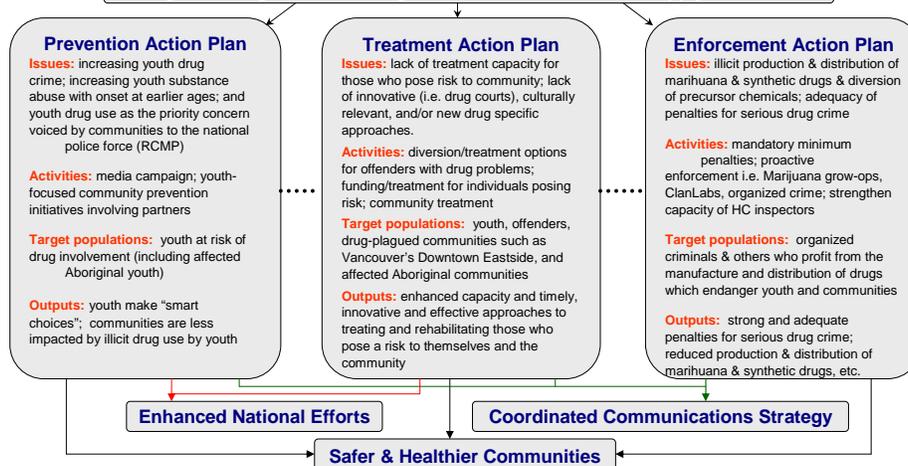
NADS: Goal and Priorities

- New direction: focus on illicit drugs to promote safer & healthier communities.
- Priorities for action include:
 1. Preventing youth drug use through community prevention and awareness;
 2. Treating and rehabilitating those who pose a risk to themselves and their communities; and
 3. Combating the production and distribution of marihuana (grow-ops) and synthetic drugs (clandestine labs), and ensuring adequate penalties for serious drug crime.
- These action plans represent the focus of the NADS and will result in a more strategic, integrated, priorities-based approach for government drug initiatives.



NADS Overview

Taking Action Against Illicit Drugs to Contain the Growth in Supply and Demand





Prevention

Issues: increasing youth drug crime; increasing youth substance abuse with onset at earlier ages; and youth drug use as the priority concern voiced by communities to RCMP.

Response: media campaign; youth- focused community prevention initiatives involving partners.

Target Populations: youth at risk of drug involvement (including Aboriginal youth); communities.

Desired Outcomes: youth make “smart choices”; communities are less impacted by illicit drug use by youth.



Treatment

Issues: lack of treatment capacity for those who pose risk to community; lack of innovative (i.e. drug courts), culturally relevant, and/or new drug specific approaches.

Response: diversion/treatment options for offenders with drug problems; funding/treatment for individuals posing risk; community treatment.

Target Populations: youth, offenders, drug-plagued communities such as Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, and affected Aboriginal communities.

Desired Outcomes: enhanced capacity and timely, innovative and effective approaches to treating and rehabilitating those who pose a risk to themselves and the community.



Enforcement

Issues: illicit production & distribution of marihuana & synthetic drugs & diversion of precursor chemicals; adequacy of penalties for serious drug crime.

Response: mandatory minimum penalties; proactive enforcement i.e. Marijuana grow-ops, ClanLabs, organized crime; strengthen capacity of HC inspectors.

Target Populations: organized criminals & others who profit from the manufacture and distribution of drugs which endanger youth and communities.

Desired Outcomes: strong and adequate penalties for serious drug crime; reduced production & distribution of marihuana & synthetic drugs, etc.



Mandatory Minimum Penalties

- The introduction of mandatory minimum penalties is a significant component of the Enforcement Action Plan and broader Strategy.
- Currently there are no minimum penalties under Canada's *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*.
- On November 20th, 2007 the government as part of the NADS introduced new legislation that reflects its commitment to ensure mandatory minimum prison sentences for serious drug offenders, including marijuana grow operators and producers of crystal meth.



Next Steps

- The NADS will be rolled out in the coming months and will address the Government's identified priorities.
- The NADS is led by the Department of Justice. The Department of Health has the lead on the Prevention and Treatment Action Plans, and the Department of Public Safety has the lead on Enforcement. Many other federal departments are involved in the collaborative effort.
- More information can be found on our website at www.nationalantidrugstrategy.gc.ca