

# **CALL TO ACTION IN FAVOR OF PREVENTION AND AGAINST MARIHUANA LEGALIZATION**

**World Congress on Addictions “Experiences based on evidence”  
Mexico City, September 23 – 25, 2009**

*Note: To be launched at the Panel “International Networks: Call to action”.*

Drug consumption is a world problem of epidemic character with severe health and social consequences that affects all the countries, no matter its development level.

To face this problem it is required the organized participation of the society, through actions based on evidence that put the health of individuals and communities before other interests.

There are voices that declare to be in favor of the legalization of drugs and its free market, which have ignored the positive results of the interventions based on evidence.

They propose the free market of marihuana by reaching decision makers with arguments that are simplistic, biased and, at times, openly false.

We, women and men working for health and against addictions, are representatives of important networks of civil society from different regions around the world, are:

- *Recognizing* the propagation of the consumption of psychoactive substance as a world problem with severe consequences for the public health and security of the countries that requires the largest international cooperation,
- *Seriously worried* about the increase of drug consumption and production in the world, particularly in the developing countries and its burden in the families, society and national health systems,
- *Recognizing also* that the science has proved that marihuana consumption is cause of mortality, morbidity and disability,
- *Recognizing also* that there are clear scientific proofs that marihuana produce substance related disorders, such as abuse and dependence,
- *Recognizing also* that most of the marihuana compounds and its smoke are pharmaco-active,
- *Recognizing also* that there is scientific evidence, which shows that the prenatal marihuana exposure generates adverse conditions to the child health and development,

- *Seriously worried* about important number of marihuana consumers among children and adolescents in the world and, particularly, worried about the fact of the decreasing of the age of initial consumption,
- *Seriously worried* about the increase of the amount of marihuana consumers among women and girls in the world,
- *Recognizing also* that prevention of drug consumption has demonstrated to be a the most efficient strategy without any doubt,
- *Emphasizing* that the development countries and the ones that are transition economies need enough financial and technical resources for drug prevention, assistance and care,
- *Are aware* of the valuable work on marihuana control of many States and *emphasizing also* the leadership of the United Nations (UN) and World Health Organization as wells as the efforts made by other international bodies,
- *Emphasizing also* the special contribution of the non-governmental organizations and the international networks as the Vienna Non-Governmental Organization Committee (VNGOC), the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions (ICAA), the World Federation against Drugs (WFAD), the European Cities against Drugs (ECAD), the Ibero-American Network of NGOs working in the field of Drug Dependence (RIOD), the Drug Prevention Network of the Americas (DPNA), the Latin American Association of Addictions (ALAD), the Euro-TC, the Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL), the Drug Prevention Network of Canada (DPNOC), the Community Alliances for Drug Free Youth (CADFY), the International Faith based Coalition and the Coalition for Drug Free California, among others; as well as other member of civil society as bodies of health professionals, women associations, youth associations, schools and universities, among others,
- *And recalling* that the countries around the world made a commitment to take actions for drug control by international treaties as the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 (amended by the Protocol of 25 March 1972); the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971; the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988; the Political Declaration adopted at the UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS 1998) and the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem of the Fifty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, (52 CND, Vienna 2009).

Therefore, in this World Congress on Addictions 2009 “Experiences based on evidence” we are committed to:

- *Advocate* for a greater resource management for services of demand reduction and its promotion,
- *Get closer* to the decision makers and ask them to develop well-balanced national policies between supply reduction and demand reduction by means of prevention programs, early detection and opportune interventions, treatment, rehabilitation and diminishing of social and sanitary consequences as the best option to face this social phenomena,
- *Disseminate* this call to action in massive social media and *advocate also* for the promotion of prevention and to say no to marihuana,
- *Propose* public policies that are in favor of a clear commitment on demand reduction and against marihuana legalization,
- *Oppose* to the pressures in favor of marihuana legalization,
- *Form* a strong alliance of health promotion and fight against marihuana legalization,
- *Preserve* integral health of people as a value to be strengthened in our society

We, all the undersigned hereby, call to action to all the involved actors, the governments, the institutions, the massive media, the scientific community, the legislator and the civil society in general to mobilize political will in favor of prevention and the application of all the necessary resources to stop marihuana legalization.

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**Mr. David Turner**  
**Chair of Vienna Non-Governmental Organization Committee (VNGOC)**

**Mr. Ake Setréus**  
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