



## ECAD Annual Mayors' Conference-2006 in Vilnius



From left: Arturas Zuokas, Vilnius Mayor, His Excellency Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, President of Iceland at the first day of the Conference

Already a good tradition, ECAD 13<sup>th</sup> Mayors' Conference in Vilnius, Lithuania, was a success even this year. The Conference went on for 2 working days, June 1-2, and was preceded by ECAD Advisory Board meeting.

ECAD Mayors' Conference of 2006 was devoted to a broad and actual topic: "Combating drugs - a world challenge." The Mayor of Vilnius, Mr. Arturas Zuokas, demonstrated his true commitment to solving the drug issues and held the idea of organising this conference close to his heart.

160 participants came from 59 cities in 20 countries, including New Zealand, Albania and Turkey.

During the official reception at the Vilnius City Hall, the city of Oslo, represented by the Commissioner for Social Affairs, Ms. Sylvi Listhaug, signed the Letter of Intent for

the prevention programme "Youth in Europe", enlarging for the time being the number of participating cities to 12. Bulgarian capital Sofia will sign the document on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July and Serbian capital Belgrade will follow suit later this summer.

ECAD 13<sup>th</sup> Mayors' Conference stood out for a number of thought-provoking scientific reports on abused buprenorphine (Prof. Erkki Vuori, Finland), effectiveness of needle-exchange programmes (Med., Dr. Kerstin Käll, Sweden) and corruption hindering the drug fight (Crim. Prof. Andrejs Vilks, ECAD in Latvia).

The Forum of Experts dedicated to prevention and integration of former drug addicts was quite enlivened by the innovative ideas of "Mano Guru", an integration programme providing work and support for former addicts.

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## Swiss drug policy – less heroin, more cocaine, the results remain damning

Lausanne, June 12, 2006.

The French-Swiss Anti-drug Association (Association romande contre la drogue, ARCD) vigorously protests at the scandalous interpretation of a study conducted by two Zurich researchers in connection with the evolution of heroin consumption. Contrary to what is misleadingly stated, the reduction in the number of heroin addicts is not due to the "liberal drug policy" applied in Switzerland; actually, the situation has not improved, but it is the narcotic products used that have changed. Less heroin but much more cocaine, such is the disturbing reality of the evolution of drug consumption, not forgetting the ravages of strongly dosed cannabis.

In 1991, the Platzspitz, the first large "open drug scene" in Zurich was about to be closed. Although the number of heroin addicts has actually dropped since then, as pointed out by Carlos Nordt and Rudolf Stohler in a study concerning the methadone and heroin substitution treatments administered in Zurich (*The Lancet*, 2 June 2006), it has certainly not been thanks to a "liberal drug policy". It is simply that the drug consumers switched their preference to cocaine and highly-dosed cannabis rather than heroin, considered a "looser" drug, with the damning results that we see today:

- no other country in Europe has recorded so high a rate of cannabis consumption among the young (and the very young) as has Switzerland; and what makes things even worse is that the rate of psychoactive substance in this cannabis is 7 to 18 times higher than in the nineties;
- the cocaine epidemic, which appeared shortly after the closing of the "open drug scenes", now concerns over 100,000 consumers; no prevention programme was set up;
- the consumption of synthetic drugs, ecstasy and GHB leading the way, continues to develop;

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# Olafur Ragnar Grimsson

President of Iceland



I was privileged last year to attend your meeting in Oslo, to be asked to become a patron of a special project involving ten or more of your cities, a project based on research and scholarly findings which scientists in my country have produced, supported by more than two decades of studies.

In the year which has passed I have attempted to actively support your cooperation, your important endeavours and engagements in different cities. I have attended meetings in Stockholm and Sofia, St. Petersburg and elsewhere, learned from a dialogue with officials and local leaders, with people who hear the daily burden, with police officers and doctors, welfare officials and others, met with drug addicts who want to be cured, listened to their worries, felt the desperation of their struggle, shared in the fear which their families suffer.

This has for me been a valuable journey, giving me insights and a broader understanding. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve you in this war and hopefully my participation has been of some help.

The most important lesson which I have learned is that we are all in this together and only cooperation can bring solutions, cooperation both across the boundaries of our countries and across the boundaries which divide our societies into different sectors... We have much to teach each other. The experience of every city brings important elements to our common understanding. The successes and the failures which we all encounter can help others to find a better way...

But cooperation must also be across the boundaries within our own communities, aimed at bringing different sectors together, creating a

solid foundation for a common effort.

It has struck me, both in discussions within my own country and in dialogue with many people across Europe, how isolated the efforts to combat drugs can be from each other, how institutions do not combine their efforts, how often bureaucratic barriers prevent the use of good ideas, how far apart concerned people can be.

We must therefore create solid networks of cooperation, both in our cities and within our nations, reaching out to all who care and are willing to help, bring together public movements and non-governmental organizations, involve the media and communities in different areas of our respective cities; also schools and sport associations, the boy scouts and the girl scouts, teachers and parents, and attempt to make each and everyone aware that their role is important, that together we can reduce this threat.

In the spirit of such endeavours, in the hope of bringing different sectors together, we have decided in Iceland to dedicate one day next autumn to sending an important message to the nation, describing the most important measures in successful prevention, explaining how we can help the young to say no, how we can save the lives of millions...

We have created a special framework of cooperation for this purpose, focusing on what we have termed "*A Day of Prevention*". The association of municipalities in Iceland - embracing all cities, towns and villages - has agreed to participate in this effort. The Icelandic Sports and Olympic Association has also promised to be with us and so have the Youth Association, the Scouts Movement and others. The University of Iceland and the University of Reykjavik have agreed to provide the scholarly foundation and the State Radio and Television Network will help in carrying the message to each and every home...

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## Jim Corr

Chairman, ECAD



ECAD Advisory Board is continually reappraising its approach to the multitude of problems for individuals, families and communities brought about by the abuse of drugs. I fully realise that it would be the dearest wish of every Mayor during his/her term of office, to significantly reduce the harm caused to individuals and society arising from a misuse of drugs.

To achieve such a result, there must be concerted focus on *supply reduction, prevention, treatment and research*. These four themes must be the four pillars of a city's anti-drug strategy.

It is imperative that a city should at certain intervals assess:

- *has it got an integrated and well-managed response to the illicit drug trade across its entire community?*
- *how effective are the city's service-interventions based on the four pillars – supply reduction, prevention, treatment and research?*
- *is the city ensuring that responses are monitored and evaluated according to best practice and value for money principles?*

...People and their welfare are at the core of ECAD's existence and activities. It is time for every public representative in our European cities to acknowledge the terrible effects of drug-abuse... Every politician here today knows that there is a drug problem in some parts or

perhaps all of his/her city.

If we know, for example, that poor socio-economic status is associated with substance abuse, then it is necessary to ensure that we employ proactive social policies that redress economic inequities, improve access to education, provide employment, enable access to good-quality housing and support overall improvement of peoples' quality of life, as these are known protective factors that can reduce the incidence of drug abuse/misuse.

No one agency can tackle all the drug related problems on its own, but working together, we can employ joint planning and forward thinking... In this regard, I would respectfully ask the mayors present this morning to consider establishing a *Drug Task Force* in their cities. Such a group would be composed of representatives from the Police, the Customs & Excise, the health services, the education sector, youth services and the training agencies and community activists.

This would be a dedicated core team of people who would drive the development of projects; monitor and evaluate anti-drug initiatives and provide administration support for voluntary effort.

The task force members and the agencies they represent need, of course, to agree shared values and agree a joint work programme that complements the plans and activities of their individual agencies.

Finally, I would appeal to mayors to consider *how adequate are the treatment facilities in your city for drug addicts?*

## Swiss drug policy ...

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- the results of this rise in the consumption of drugs are increased violence, depression, psychoses and a fast-rising suicide rate among the young;
- from 1999 to 2005, the number of fatal ODs increased from 181 to 212 throughout Switzerland and from 45 to 63 in the canton of Zurich alone;
- the introduction of a so-called "harm-reduction" policy in the nineties was undertaken to the detriment of prevention, therapy and repression. Over the past six years, 44 detox and rehabilitation centres (25% of the total number) have disappeared. The demand for residential therapies is in free fall.

The ARCD would like to point out some facts concerning the prescription of heroin, which went from the testing stage (1994-1996) to that of a treatment claiming to be therapeutic (1999) and refunded by the health insurance companies (2002). To date, 2,903 drug addicts have gone through the heroin prescription programmes. Some of them (over 200?) have died. The sticking rate of participants in the programmes is barely 50 to 70% according to the duration of the treatment. It is the most marginalized, and hence those who constitute the prime target audience, who drop out of the programmes for lack of support. Of those who remain, rare are those who go for a therapy aimed at abstinence.

The 2005 annual report of the Koda heroin prescription centre, in Bern, indicates that 3 drug addicts out of 195, last year, managed to detox. That means that 98% of the participants continue to consume opiates, often in combination with other illegal products. So this approach has contributed to maintaining their dependence.

The social costs related to the consumption of drugs in Switzerland are evaluated at more than 4 billion francs a year. Over time, the costs of an abstinence-centred treatment appear much less than those of the substitution programmes. With heroin prescription, the taxpayers and persons insured with health insurance companies are made to assume expenditure which could be avoided.

The ARCD is calling for the introduction of a new policy to combat illicit drugs based on prevention worthy of the name, a reinforcement of the medical care services, with abstinence as the therapeutic goal, and an appropriate legal response to all infringements, with a firm and systematic repression of narcotic trafficking.

THE ARCD Press Release

## ECAD Annual Mayors' Conference-2006 in Vilnius

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One of the leaders for another engaging prevention project for the young "New Fashion", Lithuanian artist Linas Karalius presented the project himself at the Conference. Modern pop-, rock- and other trend artists and singers in Lithuania become more aware of the exemplary influence of healthy and sober life style they exercise and can propagate to young

minds. After the project presentation the conference participants could enjoy short, but impressive performance of one of the project's contributors, young and popular Lithuanian singer *Sati*.

Conference participants were invited to spend their third day in Lithuania observing Vilnius panorama, examining Day Care Centre for risk group girls or Social Counselling



After signing Letter of Intent: Tomas Hallberg, ECAD director, speaking. Men to his right: Jim Corr, ECAD Chairman; Arturas Zuokas, Vilnius Mayor; His Excellency Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, the President of Iceland. Women to the right: Sylvi Listhaug, Oslo Commissioner for Social Affairs; Björg Månun Andersson, Director General at Oslo Municipality; and English-Lithuanian interpreter. Left from Tomas Hallberg: Lithuanian moderator at the reception in Vilnius City Hall.

Clinic "Demetra". Many chose also to visit the old castle at the Trakai City.

ECAD thanks wholeheartedly Vilnius Mayor Arturas Zuokas and Vilnius Municipality for their regard and hospitality when organising the conference.

Next year ECAD Mayors' conference will be kindly hosted in May 2007 in Istanbul, Turkey.

## Hans Lundborg

Chairman, UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs

The UN Drug Conventions, which together form the world's multilateral drug control system, are a very valuable piece of political capital. This control system has developed and evolved over nearly a hundred years. It is therefore one of the oldest forms of multilateral cooperation in the world and indeed pre-dates the UN by half a century.

The system began in 1909 as an international meeting called the Shanghai Opium Commission. This was called to address China's opium problem.

The custodian of all these multilateral agreements was the predecessor of the UN – the League of Nations. When the UN was constituted after the Second World War, it became the custodian of the multilateral treaties.

The first principle of drug control is the protection of public health – drugs must be made available for medical and scientific purposes, and must not be available to illicit

markets. Many people do not understand this dual role of the UN Drug Conventions: they regulate the production and trade of both legitimate medical drugs as well as illicit drugs. More than half of all prescription drugs worldwide are controlled under either the 1961 or the 1971 Conventions.

This shows a unique dimension of the multilateral system: it has a mandatory character. Once a country ratifies an international convention, it implicitly agrees to measure its national policy against an international standard. Thus, if a country is a signatory to the Single Convention, it must ensure that the drugs controlled under that Convention – for example, cannabis – are also controlled in its national legislation.

The UN Drug Conventions enjoy almost universal adherence, and practically all Member States of the UN have signed them. That is the strength of the system...

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## Tore Opdal Hansen

Mayor of Drammen, Norway

## Michael Sandin

Mayor of Staffanstorp, Sweden

## Hans Lundborg

Chairman, UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs



Left to right: (half-seen) Arturas Zuokas, Vilnius Mayor, Lithuania; Tom Doherty, Killarney Mayor, Ireland; Jan Oddvar Skisland, Kristiansand Mayor, Norway; Joseph Zammit, Pembroke Mayor, Malta; Tore Opdal Hansen, Drammen Mayor, Norway; Michael Sandin, Staffanstorp Mayor, Sweden; Valery Korb, Mayor of Kohtla-Jarve, Estonia.

For me, as the Mayor of Drammen, it is important to meet you all. My being here makes it easier to put drug problems on the local political agenda, and to strengthen our focus in this matter.

In our work against drugs we use a variety of measures, for instance in schools and colleges to prevent drug misuse among young people. It is also important, however, to give drug misusers a chance to live a decent life, even with their addiction.

We offer a clean bed for the night, a shared house with professional assistance or a simple flat whenever he or she is ready for it. In doing this, while appreciating it is not easy, it will be possible for misusers, with professional and volunteer help, to work their way out of their misuse, presupposed their own motivation to do so.

We say *No!* to drug-injecting rooms in Drammen, but we say *Yes!* to low threshold health care.

We have close cooperation with voluntary organizations in our efforts to care for the drug misusers, especially the Norwegian Red Cross and the Church City Mission, but also various other voluntary and idealistic organizations.

Our political attitude is clear and firm:  
***We reject drugs!***

When Staffanstorp became a member of European Cities Against Drugs on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2004 it was an important step in our endeavour. Mr. Torgny Peterson gave an appreciated speech to the city council on the topic the very same evening.

For me, and for Staffanstorp, the membership of European Cities Against Drugs is very important and vital to our own work against the problem.

First, but not only, as a political way to point out the importance of retaining a restrictive drug policy. Far too many obscure organisations as well as immoral commercial interests are involved in advocating legalisation of drugs. We, who are against legalisation of drugs, must make our position clear and speak out loud. Being a member of ECAD is a very good way doing that. For the moment I can't find any better!

But, second, also, for the opportunity to form important allegiances in the ever raging war against those who make, traffic and sell drugs. Therefore it's important not only for me self as a Mayor taking part in such activities as this conference, but also for the people doing the real job. The truth is, as we all well know, that the fight against drugs cannot stop at the borders between cities or countries.

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The weakness of the system is that many Member States do not have the capacity, or the resources, to implement the norms and laws that they put on their statute books.

...This is where the technical assistance functions the UN come in. It can help its Member States to build their capacity to implement the Drug Conventions: to control supply, arrest traffickers, reduce demand, initiate treatment for abuse and rehabilitate addicts. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime thus has a normative function – to maintain the Conventions and an operational function – to assist Member States in implementing the Conventions. It also has a third, equally important knowledge function: it must be the repository of objective and reliable information on the size of the drug problem and how it is evolving over time.

...What are the main challenges we face today, on the global level? We can look at them within the categories of the *four main groups of illicit drugs*:

### Opium/Heroin

Opium production at the global level is stable. It is declining in South-East Asia – the so-called Golden Triangle. The main problem is Afghanistan, which produced nearly 90% of the world's illicit opium in 2005.

### Cocaine

The area under coca cultivation is stable, but cocaine production may be going up because of better yields. Cocaine consumption is going down in the USA, but there is a worrying trend: it is increasing in Europe.

### Amphetamine-type Stimulants (ATS)

The amphetamine problem appears to be stable. Methamphetamine appears to be spreading beyond its traditional markets in North America and South-East Asia.

### Cannabis

Cannabis is produced and consumed practically everywhere, in most countries of the world. About 160 mln people use it (UNODC 2005).

## ★ PANEL OF MAYORS



**ECAD** is Europe's leading organisation promoting a drug free Europe and representing millions of European citizens. Drug dealing and drug abuse cause enormous problems in Europe. Nations and their citizens are affected by the consequences of drug abuse. ECAD member cities work to develop initiatives and efforts against drug abuse supporting the United Nations Conventions which oppose legalisation and promote policies to eradicate drug abuse worldwide. Has your city joined ECAD?

### European Cities Against Drugs

ECAD, Stadshuset  
105 35 Stockholm, Sweden  
Tel. +46-8-5082 93 62 Fax +46-8-5082 94 66  
e-mail: [ecad@ecad.net](mailto:ecad@ecad.net) [www.ecad.net](http://www.ecad.net)

ECAD Regional office in Russia [www.ecad.ru](http://www.ecad.ru)  
[zazulin@ecad.ru](mailto:zazulin@ecad.ru) Phone +7-812-328 96 65

ECAD Regional office in Latvia  
[vilnis.kipens@kurzeme.rcc.lv](mailto:vilnis.kipens@kurzeme.rcc.lv)  
Phone +371-7037330 Fax +371-7037331