
Conference Report

Caracas meeting proposes continental police force against drugs

The following is an eyewitness report from the Aug. 5-9 Fourth South American Congress of Public Security, held in Caracas, Venezuela:

"The Congress addressed itself to three issues: the drug trade, terrorism, and subversion, all of which "are intimately connected with each other," according to Venezuelan Justice Minister José Manzo González, who opened up the congress.

The event was attended by delegations from Peru, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela, and was organized by the Cooperative Armed Forces of Venezuela, whose training school EFOFAC was used as the headquarters of the event.

Dr. Manzo González spoke of "international collaboration" as the "key" to resolving the problems facing humanity. He referred to the need for international collaboration in cultural matters, and stressed that, therefore, "there is even more reason for such collaboration when referring to the fight against different forms of criminal activity." He addressed the links between drugs and subversion, offering as an example last November's M-19 assault on the Colombian Justice Palace, which he described as "monstrous." The fact that "the paid assailants burned the files on the drug traffickers" who were to be extradited, "shows the hand of the drug trade," said Dr. Manzo.

The Justice Minister referred to the "international of crime" and issued a call for "coordination to fight jointly" and at the same time to promote the economic development of the nations of the continent: "[Crime is prevented through] improvement in the living standards and conditions of life of our Latin American population, who in their majority live in critical poverty, making it practically impossible for there to emerge citizens appropriate to life in a republic."

Brazilian representative Col. Jayro Gomes de Oliveira reiterated those same sentiments, explaining that "the principal cause (of "Contemporary Crime" [title of his presentation]) is in the economic crisis which increasingly generates misery and marginalization. . . ." He proposed attacking the problem from three viewpoints: "With the effort of an increasingly trained police force; with the readiness of governments to toughen their laws and prepare plans to give citizens

a better living standard. . . . Also we must have the support of the community to do its part in forming a better social person."

Call for international police network

The head of the delegation from Colombia, Brig.-Gen. José Luis Vargas Villegas, spoke of the organizational and legal role in the fight against these crimes, while Lt.-Col. Teodoro Campos Gómez, director of the Colombian anti-narcotics police, emphasized Colombia's anti-drug successes and the need for unity. He explained that Colombia was no longer the world's leading exporter of marijuana, due to "the commitment of a country which emphatically rejects the drug trade" and which has "as a national purpose and institutional objective, to fight against the drug trade and the drug traffickers." He stressed the need for "an international network of police integration" to coordinate international and national operations against drugs.

Campos also presented a videotape of his country's anti-drug operations in the *Llanos* zone, and publicly, applauded the cooperation of Peru in joint operations to eradicate laboratories and drug cultivation along their common border. He insisted that the chemicals used to fumigate coca and marijuana plants are not herbicides, and that any real ecological damage is done by the drug traffickers. He ended his presentation with the stirring words, "United We Can" (*Unidos si podemos*).

Among Colombia's proposals to the conference were: broadening bilateral agreements; expanding the network of information and intensifying joint actions; continuing with border agreements; recognizing the drug trade as a crime against humanity, with its consequences from the point of view of international law; and expanding extradition treaties.

Peruvian representative Gen. Manuel Landauro Yvascone also emphasized unity, since the drug trade "is not confined to a single nation. . . . No nation is invulnerable, nor can it be a passive link in the chain" of drug trafficking." He called for the creation of special operatives to "destroy the [traffickers'] organizations, since "no one country can be solely responsible" for the war against drugs. He gave as proof of the efficacy of unity in the fight the coordinated

operations between Colombia and Ecuador, and Colombia and Peru. He also pointed to the regional Lara Bonilla Agreement against drugs signed last May 1, and personally thanked Colombia for the collaboration offered in Peru's "Condor" anti-drug operations, about which he presented a videotape.

The illegal trafficking in drugs "destroys the economies, the moral fiber, and the sense of national identity known as patriotism," said General Landauro, and the solution "is mutual cooperation," since "only thus can we face history, to say that we are nation-builders."

Yearly conference proposed

General Landauro Yvascone concluded with the proposal for "a systematic-functional organization of uniformed South American police against the illegal drug trade," which would hold a yearly conference of the continent's police commanders to maintain a unified force which might be called upon to act in any country that requests such aid. The general emphasized that this proposal "does not exclude the collaboration of non-South American international organizations, including the United States."

General Landauro argued that the crime of drug trafficking be permanently designated "a crime against humanity," and that commissions be sent out from the congress to urge all participating governments to apply the conclusions of the Congress within a maximum of six months, in the meanwhile turning the police commands of each nation into centers of information on the drug trade. He also proposed the creation of a "South American multilateral extradition treaty," and asked all participants to accept the offer of Peru to serve as a provisional center while implementation of such a system is put in place.

The presentation from Venezuela was given by Brig.-Gen. Freddy Maya Cardona, intelligence director of the Cooperative Armed Forces (FAC). He first expressed his concern that the fight against drugs be considered just another task. "It must be done away with," he said, and to accomplish this there is "a common need for a unified South America against the drug trade, which otherwise contributes to the destabilization of our governments."

He recognized Venezuela as "a fundamental link in the chain" because of its geography and its "perspective of becoming a great drug depository." He mentioned the recent convention against the drug trade, held in Vienna on July 27 through Aug. 1 and attended by some of the high military commanders of Ibero-America. At that meeting, there was discussion of joint extradition treaties as well.

Saving future generations

One of the most important presentations to the conference was that of Gen. Alfredo Sandoval Hernández, chief of Venezuela's National Guard, who emphasized that the drug trade "is a plague of protean dimensions, which seeks not only to

dissolve the moral framework of all mankind, but also to set up channels leading to the physical and mental annihilation of present and future generations, in a demented desire to see the defeat of man's destiny on Earth."

General Sandoval continued, "We should not lack the courage to identify the sinister targets, which we should shoot with a sure aim. Our very survival demands it. And we are not going to relent in this endeavor. . . . This is not a dream, gentlemen. It is a reality which we must build with firm spirit and grand ambition to win the victory, which is not tangled up in utopian folds, but which defiantly sets itself up as a judicious possibility."

Joint military action against drugs takes off

Mexico

Five thousand Mexican army troops and Federal Judicial Police agents fanned out across Northwest Mexico Aug. 11 to destroy marijuana and opium poppy fields just before the harvest. In launching *Operación Pacífico VII*, Attorney-General Sergio García Ramírez said it would last until February and would involve 40 airplanes and helicopters operated exclusively by the Mexican authorities. He stressed that this is in addition to the 30,000 men permanently involved in anti-drug activities. The aircraft are used to help locate the narcotics fields and move troops to them or spray them with herbicides from the air. The sweep will hit the core drug producing centers of the states of Durango, Chihuahua and Sinaloa.

Guatemala

Guatemala and the United States have agreed to joint anti-drug operations, the press office of the U.S. embassy in Guatemala announced Aug. 9. Combined teams from Guatemala's Treasury Police and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will spray herbicides on opium poppies and marijuana plantations in the northern jungle state of El Petén. No U.S. military forces will be involved.

Last August, *EIR* issued a 33-minute film documentary on Guatemala's battle against the narco-terrorists and a 109-page Special Report written as a "combat manual" for implementing a War on Drugs. These helped mobilize public support inside Guatemala for aggressive action against the drug traffickers and political support in Washington for backing up that effort.