



# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2008



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*May 2007– May 2008*



# CHAIRMAN'S

## From Istanbul to Warsaw

Let me begin with a sincere word of thanks to the Mayor and Council of the historic city of Istanbul, a city which for centuries has been a vital link in uniting people of Europe and Asia, for hosting 14<sup>th</sup> ECAD Mayors' Conference.

About 350 delegates from near 60 cities in more than 20 European countries were represented at the conference.

Prominent speakers included Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the Vienna-based United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and John P. Walters, Director of The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). Mr Costa encouraged European cities to establish twinning and mentoring projects to help cities in developing countries tackle drugs and suggested that ECAD could be expanded into a new World Cities Against Drugs organization. "We all have a shared responsibility to fight drugs and protect those who are vulnerable to them."



*"While you are at it, why not encourage your fellow mayors from around the world to follow your example and organize themselves into African, Asian, or North American Cities Against Drugs - all linking up as World Cities Against Drugs. That would certainly improve networking and the sharing of information."*  
Antonio Maria Costa, ECAD 14<sup>th</sup> Mayors' Conference

## ECAD and UNGASS process

Starting at the Istanbul conference, this year of ECAD's activities was marked by our strong engagement in the United Nations and pan-European drug-political events.

I refer first of all to our enthusiastic participation in the preparatory events ahead of UNGASS, United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Narcotic Drugs, which will take place in Vienna in the beginning of 2009.



*"Together, we need to oppose any attempt to weaken the UN Conventions and resist any pressure to abdicate our obligations to our citizens. We all must work towards healing our drug users, giving them the opportunities to become and remain drug-free. Let us not listen to the voices of surrender, let us not sacrifice our youth to the interests of wealthy, elitist political activists. Their campaign is one that must be defeated, and, if we do our part, it will be."*  
John P. Walters, ECAD 14<sup>th</sup> Mayors' Conference

ECAD has since a while back actively participated in preparations before UNGASS within the Vienna NGO Committee. Our organisation is a member of Program Committee responsible for a series of consultations "Beyond 2008" with representatives for the Civil Society from all around the world. The goal with these consultations is to evaluate what has been done during the last 10 years within the field of drug combat and come up with proposals for the future drug policies.

Partly because of ECAD's large network in Eastern Europe and Russia, we have chosen to be co-responsible for the organising of the sub-regional conferences for NGOs from Eastern Europe and Central Asia which took place in Kiev, Ukraine on September 12-14, 2007 and in Belgrade, Serbia on November 18-20, 2007.

These consultations are based upon so called "balanced approach" which means that NGOs representing different ideological grounds – those that are focused more on harm reduction and those focused more on prevention – are welcome to share their views. Representatives for the regional conferences will meet in July 2008 in Vienna for concluding consultations where the results of all 9 regional hearings from all around the world will be analysed and presented in a document addressed to the UN General Assembly.

*Tomas Hallberg comments on the conference in Kiev:*

*"There were very interesting, constructive discussions in Kiev. In short, many organisations face the same problems no matter what ideological ground they stand on. They often describe their problems from a local perspective and their difficulties are about cooperation with the authorities, corruption etc.*

*"It was useful for me to learn at first hand what the situation looks like in different countries. Organisations from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Belarus among others participated in the first sub-regional consultations. It is obvious that all those countries have different conditions for the anti-drug work."*

## ECAD and UNGASS: Activities in 2008

Preparatory activities on the threshold of this large event are under way in many countries.

Sweden, where ECAD has its seat, is taking an active part in the preparations. A number of Swedish non-governmental organisations, ECAD is among them, initiated World Forum Against Drugs which will take place in Stockholm on September 8-10, 2008. This is the first international conference gathering people from all over the world who work against narcotic drugs at grass root level – professionals and activists, NGOs and decision makers, researchers and artists, entrepreneurs, self-help groups and rehabilitation clinics, and others who want to reduce drug abuse and illegal drug trafficking.

I encourage you to learn more about this Forum on the homepage [www.wfad08.org](http://www.wfad08.org).

### Facts:

Among the main objectives of the Forum are

- To strengthen the popular resistance against drug abuse and illegal drug traffic, referring to UN Conventions on Narcotic Drugs (1961, 1977 and 1988) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 33.
- To spread the information about how a restrictive legislation on drugs can prevent and reduce the abuse of narcotic drugs, referring to a resolution from the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Drugs (UNGASS) 1998, in practice signed by all states of the world.

## World Mayors' Conference in Gothenburg

The City of Gothenburg decided in the end of October 2007 to apply to ECAD for hosting a World Mayors' Conference as part of the preparatory events before UNGASS 2009.

Advisory Board found it suitable to hold the 16<sup>th</sup> ECAD Mayors Conference at the same time, i.e. on February 5-6, 2009 in Gothenburg. The conference will focus on the importance of maintaining restrictive and humane drug policies, both nationally and internationally.

### Facts

In the decision, the municipality of Gothenburg stated that

“According to a UN report (“Sweden’s successful drug policy: review of the evidence”), Sweden has one of the lowest levels of drug problem in Europe. The country spends significantly more resources on drug control than the EU average. Sweden represents an example of a restrictive and humane drug policy. That is why it would be appropriate if, on the threshold of UNGASS, a Swedish city would host a conference for the mayors from all around the world.”

I would like to draw your attention to the anti-drug work carried out in this Swedish city. Over the years, Gothenburg has enjoyed good cooperation between authorities involved in the anti-drug fieldwork: municipality, health care, police, customs, prison system and prosecutor. Social detection activities among the adolescents and outreach work among the drug addicts have been practised since the 1970s-80s. These efforts are marked by good continuity and high competence. Gothenburg has regularly adjusted the resources according to the needs.



Photo Göran Assner

*“We in Sweden are used to political consensus in regard to drug issues. We put a lot of resources into the anti-drug fieldwork. In many other countries the situation looks quite different. We hope that this Conference will encourage those who try to do something in spite of small resources.”*

*Ove Lundgren, Gothenburg’s representative in ECAD*

The municipality of Gothenburg, its political leadership on all levels has over the years worked for restrictive and humane drug policies. The city authorities prioritise creating connections between preventive and outreach activities, restrictive approach to drugs, high quality treatment and channels for efficient communication. The overall aim is to help individual abusers to receive the best possible support to leave the misuse behind them. Naturally, *harm reduction* measures are practiced as well. In this case, in form of social and physical care applied through providing housing under supervision, social care and easy access to health care.

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## Now let's move from Sweden to Italy!

Coinciding with the Milan fashion week, the municipal authorities had invested a lot of organisation in an issue of rather greater gravity than fashion.

Milan in cooperation with San Patrignano – Europe's largest rehabilitation community – organised a conference on Strategy, Management and Communication Against Drug Addiction. Conference took part on September 20, 2007.

Italian Vice-Minister of the Interior, Mr Marco Minniti and Deputy President of the European

Commission Mr Franco Frattini gave the keynote speeches. The conference was launched by a video message from the UN drug chief Mr. Antonio Maria Costa.

The Mayor of Milan, Mrs Letizia Moratti led the conference from the beginning to the end from the conference platform, and made a strong personal impression on the audience with her genuine knowledge and deep engagement.



*“From a political point of view, the persistent distinction between light and heavy drugs had the consequence of an increasing number of persons who perform their day-to-day activities in a state of mental alteration with dangerous effects on the consumer health and security and social problems related to their behaviour.*

*It's time to clearly see that the policies with the objective of social control (of drug use) have been a failure and that the only action to be followed is the total rehabilitation of the individuals.*

...

*Therefore Public institutions must focus on prevention policies providing education, training, communication and support to those organisations that proved to be successful in the rehabilitation process and on the return to work and to social responsibilities.”*

*Mayor of Milan Letizia Moratti's speech at ECAD Mayors' Forum in Istanbul*

Another Milan initiative that gives us at ECAD great satisfaction is the opening of a new Master Programme for drug coordinators at the University of Milan. Let me remind you that this unique education was initially designed by ECAD's branch in Russia and particularly by the efforts of its director Georgi Zazulin. St. Petersburg State University has already under a number of years carried out this educational programme. First students have graduated and joined the professional live. We wish their Italian counterparts every success.

Many ECAD contact persons give lectures for students of the programmes in St. Petersburg and Milan.

## To represent ECAD

Representatives of ECAD are often invited to speak at national and international conferences and seminars. As Chairman of ECAD, I spoke at the Irish National Conference on Substance and Alcohol Misuse for Local Authorities, The Public Service and Drug/Alcohol Misuse Service Providers. This conference took place on October 4-5 in Killarney, in my home country of Ireland.

Let me remind you of a highly successful study visit to Scotland organised by the ECAD Sweden network. Senior Swedish politicians and drug experts visited Scotland on October 28-29. The group met with the Conservative leader Annabel Goldie and a leading drug professor Neil McKeganey, head of Glasgow University's Centre For Drugs Misuse Research.

During the two-day long visit, the ECAD representatives gave 5 interviews for leading Scottish media within TV/ Radio broadcasting and the periodical press.



Annabel Goldie

## ECAD Regional Offices

Back to ECAD. Our regional offices continue their untiring efforts to promote our organisation and its values in their respective regions.

*"Scotland has much to learn from the approach to drugs misuse taken by Sweden since the 1970s. Indeed, as our analysis shows, their attitude and their policies have brought results which are in marked contrast to the experience of the Netherlands, which embarked on a radically different road 30 years ago.*

*"Sweden has an overwhelming aim of creating a drug-free society. The Netherlands went for laissez-faire and harm reduction. Drugs misuse in Sweden fell dramatically - drugs misuse in Holland rapidly increased. The lessons for us are plain."*

*Annabel Goldie (Scottish Daily Mail, "Just say Nej!", 30th October 2007)*

## Latvia

Scientific and practical seminars are an important part of activities carried out by the ECAD office in Latvia. For example, in December 2007, over 20 specialists in prevention gathered under the aegis of ECAD to evaluate current drug situation in Latvia and get an overview of the addiction tendencies in Europe.

According to the latest data from Riga Addiction Prevention Centre, the Latvian capital city has approximately 5000 injecting opiate users and some 50,000 of Riga's inhabitants are addicted to various types of narcotic substances (Riga has about 750,000 inhabitants). Unfortunately, the drug misuse tendencies are pointing upwards. It is especially alarming since the average age of drug abusers is getting lower.

Among other activities carried out by the Director of the Latvian office Andrejs Vilks I would like to mention meetings and on-going discussions with decision-makers on different levels, NGO-representatives and local authorities in order to promote ECAD, activate existing members and involve more Latvian cities into the ECAD network.

## Balkan region

A new regional office targeting ECAD members in the Balkan region started to work in 2007. The Bulgarian office is supported by the municipality of Bourgas. Dr Ivailo Dimitrov is in charge of the office. The office works to unite Balkan cities, to provide them with relevant information and stimulate experience exchange. A workshop for the Bulgarian member cities which took place on December 17-18 in Varna can serve as an example.

Novy Grad Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, hosted the 5th ECAD Balkan Conference on November 15-16. Specialists and politicians from 8 Balkan countries took part in the conference under the title "Local community in fight against drug abuse". National and international experts from the relevant fields – medicine, education, social policy and law enforcement – took part in the event. Canton Sarajevo Government and Sarajevo City were co-organisers of the conference. The delegates adopted a Declaration.

*We, the undersigned, organisers and participants of the 5th Regional Conference – ECAD Balkan network, named "Local community in fight against drug abuse" held in Sarajevo from 15th to 17th November, 2007, hereby make an*  
DECLARATION

*We agreed that:*

- *Knowledge is the basic for solving the spreading of drug problem, and as a strategy on national level based on international conventions with an obligated security measures of its implementation on local level,*
- *Coordination between both authorities from area of prevention from drug abuse, addiction diseases and associations of the citizens, civil sector. We are expecting from governmental institutions stronger stimulus in faster and more quality development of civil society,*
- *A clear leadership is the key stone for success,*
- *We recommend those for the local Government: to finance education for drug coordinators and to create special boards who could act as leaders on local, regional and national level,*
- *The task for members of ECAD from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the following period is to spread local network between municipalities, and to develop stronger cooperation with members from region and wider in Europe.*

*Municipality Mayor Novi Grad Sarajevo Mr. Damir HADŽIĆ  
Chairman of Municipality Council Novi Grad Sarajevo Mr. Hamdija LAGUMDŽIĆ  
Secretary for science and information Canton Sarajevo Mr. Safet KEŠO  
Sarajevo Mayor Mrs. Semiha BOROVIĆ*

## Istanbul

The work of Istanbul office was focused on the 14<sup>th</sup> ECAD Mayors' Conference that took place in this city and around the implementation of the *Youth in Europe* programme. Dr Nalan Engin, member of the ECAD Advisory Board, oversees the programme in the Istanbul area.

## Russia

ECAD office in Russia continues to be one of the prominent actors on the Russian anti-drug scene. ECAD office is deeply engaged in educational activities with seminars being held on a regular basis. Representatives of municipalities and NGOs from many Russian regions take part in these seminars and workshops.

Master programme for drug coordinators (see above) attracts new students each year and has now found its follower in Milan.

The Annual ECAD Russian network conferences took place in Ekaterinburg on April 12-13 and in Stavropol on November 22-23. Around 200 delegates from Moscow to Siberia took part in these network activities. The conferences discussed effectiveness of municipal anti-drug programmes and the issue of drugs and security respectively.

## Law Enforcement Co-operation Around the Baltic Sea

Another ECAD-inspired event was held in Russia in 2007. ECAD is in charge of the network Law Enforcement Co-operation Around the Baltic Sea. The network is aimed to bring together customs, prosecutors and police from Sweden, Finland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in order to improve information exchange in regard to drug enforcement. A scheduled seminar took place in St. Petersburg on December 10-11. This time it was organised in cooperation between ECAD, Swedish National Drug Coordinator "Mobilisation Against Drugs" and the Russian Federal Drug Control Agency.

This series of yearly seminars is a unique outcome of ECAD's efforts– neither other organisations nor authorities were able to take on the task to unite representatives for these professional groups on a recurrent basis. The fact that these seminars have been taking place for more than seven years in a row tells about the need for this kind of cross-border and cross-professional co-operation.

### ECAD in Veliky Novgorod, Russia



Our three-year project in Veliky Novgorod (Northwest Russia) is finished. This project has been fully financed by the Swedish International Development Agency SIDA. During the project years we carried out seminars for different work groups such as teachers, police, social workers, staff in prisons and people engaged in voluntary organisations. We have brought together municipalities of V. Novgorod and Swedish Örebro which could exchange experiences and carry out a common research in schools on alcohol, tobacco and drugs use among pupils. We have strongly supported the launch of a rehabilitation centre for substance abusers in V. Novgorod. Two other Swedish organisations, C.R.I.S. (Criminals' Return Into Society) and SMART (contract method of preventing substance abuse among adolescents), started their activities in this Russian city within the frames of the project. After the project closure they continue their work independently from ECAD support.

V. Novgorod is now an active part of ECAD Russia network and participates actively in many ECAD activities.

### Sweden

Sweden has been mentioned in my report more than once, which is quite natural considering the fact that it is a home ground for both the network of the Swedish member cities and for our organisation.

Swedish network organises/co-organises numerous conferences. The annual network conference took place in Gothenburg on October 4-5. The delegates (over a hundred participants from 22 municipalities) discussed organised crime and reduction of illicit drugs availability.

The network ECAD Sweden came up with a praiseworthy initiative that I would like to draw your attention to. The network instituted a prize "ECAD Sweden contribution of the year". Besides the honour and a diploma the winner receives a challenge prize. With this prize, the Board of the Swedish network aims to encourage specifically good and important local efforts in the drug area.

This year, the municipality of Timrå received the prize for the work done to motivate youth to refrain from alcohol, tobacco and drug use. The model of Timrå is based upon a broad co-operation between the municipality and the local enterprise. Young people are invited to take part in many free time activities against signing a contract with obligation to refrain from these substances.

The network, together with the Stockholm Head office, offers its members education for drug co-ordinators. The programme for 2007 included three seminars on such subjects as prevention, international drug situation, treatment, and law enforcement. The series of seminars include a study visit to St. Petersburg which is due in June 2008. This education targets drug coordinators who work in municipalities across the country.

Each region, where ECAD has its member cities, faces different challenges in regard to drugs. In Sweden, misuse of khat came into focus. ECAD Sweden was among organisers of two international conferences dealing with misuse of khat and its social consequences. The conferences took place in June 2007, March 2008 and the third one is planned for October 2008.

Khat is a limited issue looking at the problem from a global perspective. The misuse of this drug is spread most extensively in Eastern Africa, but it is also abused by certain folk groups, fugitives or emigrants.

Since khat is a "fresh product", which has to be consumed within a short period of time, it is shipped to Europe via major international air routes that deliver the drug to Amsterdam or London to be transported further for export or local consumption.

Khat is a legal drug in some key-positioned European countries. This implies a completely legal entrance into the EU customs area and a possibility for comparatively easy distribution to Sweden where khat is illegal since 1989.

In the Resolution, the Conference participants demanded that khat should be classified as a controlled/illegal substance in the UN drug treaties.



## Study visits

ECAD office in Stockholm receives many international delegations which come to study Swedish experience in drug combat. These groups represent municipalities, governments, international agencies, NGOs and students.

So, for example, a 37-strong group of drug experts, psychologists, teachers and social workers from St. Petersburg, Russia visited ECAD on November 21-23. The group was particularly interested to learn about methods practised in Stockholm which are based on collaboration between police, social services and addiction care services. These methods are developed for different groups, from teenagers previously unknown as drug abusers to heavy drug addicts.



## ECAD and EU

ECAD's involvement in the pan-European initiatives speeds up. When EU Commission launched a Civil Society Forum on drugs, ECAD was invited to take part in the first meeting, which took place on December 13-14, 2007. The selection criteria were based on the Green Paper on the Role of Civil Society in EU. The goal with this forum is to improve communication between the European institutions and the civil society.

Unfortunately the meeting was not very thoroughly planned and was criticised for that by the delegates. ECAD viewpoint was that there was no need to gather NGOs in order to find out what their views were. This could be done by anyone in the course of 20 minutes. However, the NGOs have a great potential in regard to research which differs from the official presentations from their respective countries. The NGOs carry out research themselves or support independent researches whose views could be a useful addition to the official information.

Nevertheless, ECAD sees its engagement on the European level as a very important work and does everything what is needed in order to make the voice of people living in the ECAD cities heard in the EU context.

*We believe in and work in order to create a drug-free European city. This was the main reason why we asked for ECAD membership, since this is one of the basic objectives of this association.  
Mayor of Nis, Serbia, Smiljko Kostic at ECAD Mayors' Forum in Istanbul*

### Message to the Mayors of American cities

ECAD Mayors' Conference in Istanbul agreed upon sending a message U.S. mayors about drug policy and efforts to legalize drugs in the United States:

"To the Mayors of the United States:

We, the mayors of the European Cities Against Drugs (ECAD), urge you to join us in fighting against the marijuana/cannabis legalization movement. Those that claim marijuana/cannabis is harmless are wrong.

We know that many of our citizens are suffering health, psychological, and social consequences from marijuana/cannabis use. As leaders, we understand that the inaccurate and misleading information spread by well funded legalization advocates must be countered.

Europe and the United States must work together to get the facts out to all of our citizens.

In our cities and countries, activists are organizing initiatives to decriminalize marijuana/ cannabis or otherwise discourage enforcement of controls on marijuana/ cannabis sales and possession. We must fight back. Legalization of drugs, or measures that facilitate marijuana/cannabis use, should be opposed, both because of their negative impact on the individual and because of the broader message of tolerance of drug abuse such actions communicate to youth. These measures both violate the spirit and the letter of the UN anti-drug Conventions which we are committed to upholding.

We urge you to join with us in a global effort to oppose marijuana/cannabis legalization in order to protect all of the world's citizens from the terrible consequences of drug abuse.

Signed,

European Cities Against Drugs"

### Youth in Europe progress

The "Youth in Europe - A drug prevention programme" was launched in 2005 under the Patronage of H.E. Olafur Ragnar Grimson, President of Iceland. Its methodology is based on the work that was initiated at an ECAD meeting in Reykjavik in 1997. The main focus of the programme is to reduce the substance abuse amongst adolescents in Europe. The programme includes two major parts, namely prevention and research.

The first data collection took place in October 2006 with 10 participating cities: Helsinki, Kaunas, Klaipeda, Oslo, Reykjavik, Riga, St.Petersburg, Sofia, Vilnius, and Bagilar (a district of Istanbul).

The day before the Mayors' conference in Istanbul in May 2007, the first figures were introduced from the common database and those of you who were there will remember the vast difference in smoking, alcohol drinking and substance use between the cities.

In order to follow up on the researchers' cooperation, two more meetings were held: one in Reykjavik in October 2007 and another in Riga in February 2008.

The next data collection will take place in all participating cities (17) in October 2008.

*"The Program has been successful in fulfilling the research part and Actavis Pharmaceuticals has in many cities assisted financially in the data collection process. The Motivation part in the various cities has on the other hand been less successful and only a hands-full of cities already have clear action plans on how to reduce drug abuse amongst adolescents. Too often this has to do with an obscure focus on what the work of the motivation parties should be.*

*It is my hope that it will be the main focus of the YiE program over the next years to strengthen the motivation part in all the participating cities - and the participating cities should not be limited to a small number. When it comes to fighting drugs than we are in a fight against time."*

*Jón Sigfússon, programme co-ordinator*

## Conclusion

Your Advisory Board met as usual three times to plan activities and overview the following of the budget. The last meeting was held in Stockholm in February 2008. During this meeting we accepted the resignation of ECAD Director Tomas Hallberg and appointed a committee responsible for hiring of a new director of the Stockholm office.

Tomas Hallberg has served as ECAD Director from 1999 to 2008. Under his leadership, ECAD developed into a well functioning organisation with a well known name on the international drug arena. The Advisory Board expressed its appreciation for the work done by Tomas and his untiring efforts to promote ECAD, to guarantee the continued growth of the organisation - in many aspects - and, last but not least, to use the budget in the most efficient way.

New Director will lead the everyday organisational life with the start in August 2008.

Meanwhile our Deputy Director Åke Setréus guarantees that the organisation will roll on as it should.

This time of reorganisation is also a propitious occasion to lift up the work administered by the employees of Head office and our regional offices. Their professionalism and efforts contribute to the success of ECAD's programs and initiatives.

Jim Corr, Chairman



*Jim Corr, Councillor, Cork, Ireland  
ECAD Chairman*



