

IDPC Alert - February 2008

International Drug Policy Consortium

The International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC) is a global network of NGOs and professional networks that specialise in issues related to illegal drug production and use. The Consortium aims to promote objective and open debate on the effectiveness, direction and content of drug policies at national and international level, and supports evidence-based policies that are effective in reducing drug-related harm. It disseminates the reports of its member organisations about particular drug-related matters, and offers expert consultancy services to policymakers and officials around the world.

Updated IDPC Website

The website of IDPC plays a major role in the implementation of our mission. This gives our members, and anyone else interested in drug policy, easy access to a wide range of reports on issues related to national and international policies in this field. Through this platform are able to reach out to over 10,000 individuals and organisations around the world, and this number is continually increasing.

We have recently redesigned the website, which you can visit at the same address as before: <http://www.idpc.info/>. The aim has been to to make the site more user-friendly, and to make our messages and publications more accessible.

The Spanish language version of the website is now live, and we will shortly have an Italian version ready. Some documents are also available in French and Russian, and we will create versions of the website in these languages in the first half of 2008.

PUBLICATIONS

IDPC BRIEFING PAPER 7 - THE INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL BOARD: CURRENT TENSIONS AND OPTIONS FOR REFORM.

This briefing paper brings together material and analysis from a number of recent reports that raise questions about the role and functioning of the INCB. The IDPC analysis is that the Board mixes a rigid and overzealous approach to some aspects of its mandate, while showing a selective reticence in others. These inconsistencies do not arise automatically from the structure or role of the Board, but from the operational and policy decisions of its officers and members.

http://idpc.info/php-bin/documents/IDPC_BP_07_INCB_TensionsAndOptions_EN.pdf

The IDPC has prepared a response to the INCB annual report 2007, which is being launched on the 4th March 2008. We will distribute our response through this alert network on that day.

BECKLEY FOUNDATION REPORT 13 - RECALIBRATING THE REGIME: THE NEED FOR UN SYSTEM-WIDE COHERENCE IN DRUG CONTROL AND HUMAN RIGHTS.

This report - a collaborative effort between several drugs, health, and human rights NGOs - looks at the tensions between some aspects of the global drug control system, and UN human rights standards. The authors point out that, despite numerous instances of human rights abuses perpetrated in the name of drug control, there has been little engagement with this issue by the responsible bodies, the UNODC, INCB and the Human Rights treaty bodies.

http://idpc.info/php-bin/documents/BFDPP_RP_13_Recal_Regime_EN.pdf

EU CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM ON DRUGS: REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING

Summary report of the first meeting of the EU Civil Society Forum held in Brussels on December 13th and 14th 2007. Created by the Drug Policy Action Group, one of the 26 networks selected to participate in the Forum. Topics that were discussed include drugs and prisons, evaluation of the current EU Action Plan on Drugs, and the drug information and prevention funding programme.

http://idpc.info/php-bin/documents/DPAG_EU_CivilSocForumDrugIssues_EN.pdf

INTERNATIONAL HARM REDUCTION ASSOCIATION (IHRA) - "Unique in International Relations? A Comparison of the International Narcotics Control Board and the UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies"

The International Narcotics Control Board has been criticised for being one of the most secretive bodies in the UN system. It holds its meetings behind closed doors. No minutes are published. There is no opportunity for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to observe or make submissions.

The INCB has claimed that it is "unique in international relations", and has used this allegedly unique status to justify its exclusion of civil society from its deliberations and its closed meetings. However, this paper examines the basis for this claim of uniqueness and finds that the most secretive and selective aspects of the Board's operation are a result of its own decisions on working procedures.

<http://www.ihra.net/uploads/downloads/NewsItems/Barrett-UniqueinInternationalRelations.pdf>

EVENTS

OUTREACH CONFERENCE OSLO, NORWAY 22 - 24 APRIL 2008: Reaching socially excluded youth, working towards social inclusion

As you can see from the website www.outreachwork.no, the main target audience for the conference are: practitioners, policy planners and researchers / educators that are involved with early intervention or street-based youth work. The conference already has over 200 registrations from across Europe, Africa and North America . Please visit our website for more information and registration. For questions about the conference you are welcome to contact: henning.pedersen@sam.hio.no

http://www.idpc.info/news/images/Oslo_OutreachConferenceApril08_EN.pdf

CND LUNCHTIME WORKSHOP - DRUG CONTROL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Monday 10th March, 2008. Vienna International Centre. In the margins of the 2008 Commission on Narcotic Drugs, this workshop will include presentations and room for debate on the issues raised in the Beckley report on this subject.

http://www.idpc.info/news/images/ViennaPanel_flyer100308.pdf

IDPC EVENING RECEPTION - REFLECTIONS ON THE UNGASS REVIEW

Tuesday 11th March, 2008. British Ambassadors Residence, Vienna .

http://www.idpc.info/news/images/IDPC_ViennaInvite110308_EN.pdf

IDPC WORKSHOP IN THE MARGINS OF THE BARCELONA HARM REDUCTION CONFERENCE - SATURDAY 10th MAY 2008, 5.00 - 7.00pm.

A workshop for interested NGOs to review their contribution to the UN drug policy review, and agree actions for the next phase. Details to follow.