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ECAD

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CHAIRMAN'S  
REPORT  
*2009*

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# Chairman's Report

May 2008 — February 2009:

*Activities, Reflections, Perspectives*

**ECAD — bigger than EU!**



## From Warsaw to Göteborg

Chairman's report covers ECAD activities which have taken place between the Mayors' Conferences. It was a shorter than usual time span between conferences in Warsaw and Göteborg. We have moved our annual meeting to an earlier date in order to place the ECAD Conference among other drug-political events ahead of the United Nations Strategic Drug Policy Review that is due to take place in March 2009.

Let me shed light on what has been done within the frameworks of ECAD since our last meeting on May 28-29, 2008 in the capital of Poland.

On behalf of ECAD I would like to express our sincere thanks to the city of Warsaw for hosting the 2008 Conference and for engaging in a great amount of preparatory work so that we could hear from a range of experienced and highly informed speakers.

Each city puts its own stamp when hosting the annual Mayors' Conference. Warsaw has been engaged in comprehensive surveys on the attitudes of youth towards drugs. The surveys undertaken in Warsaw and the statistics arising from such surveys will enable the public providers of services and the NGOs to design practical youth programmes which hopefully will respond in a positive way to reducing numbers of young people who experiment with illicit drugs.

It is most encouraging to learn that there is a decrease in drug consumption among youth in the city.

We in ECAD deeply appreciate the information we have learn in Warsaw. It is our wish to spread best practice among our member cities. I am appealing to our member cities to keep in contact with our Head office in Stockholm and to share with fellow cities the initiatives which you are engaged in so that we may all learn from one another.

The ECAD organisation has a huge resource in you – the committed well informed people anxious to respond to the needs of fellow citizens who are excluded from mainstream society because of the injurious effects of drugs.

” Since the day the ECAD was founded there have been many meetings and conferences devoted to the problem of drug abuse and its scale in individual countries.

The representatives of European cities have talked about prevention actions, they exchanged views, discussed trends, taken stances on important matters such as legalization of drugs, they have met during conferences of mayors and visited drug addiction treatment centres.

All these actions have been aimed at fighting for health, life and the future of our children. ”

Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, President of the City of Warsaw



Facts: Near 300 delegates representing 19 countries and 59 cities and towns took part in the 15<sup>th</sup> ECAD Mayors' Conference in Warsaw

” It is good that we have raised the issue of moral panicking in regard to youth and drugs. The atmosphere of panicking not only frightens people but also has long term consequences, namely forces communities to prioritise wrong issues.”  
Björg Månun Andersson, Advisory Board Member, Oslo

“This is a topical research with great importance for us in ECAD. We often refer to the UN Conventions on Drugs which form the basis of our work. But we should not forget the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which obliges us to protect the children from illicit drugs. That is why this research is topical – it shows the weak points in our work. It shows where we can bridge the gaps between youth and those who work with young people.”  
Georgi Zazulin, Director ECAD Russia

## Response

Some great work has been done in the field of prevention by the city of Warsaw. Preventive measures gave clear positive results. Boguslaw Prajsner from the PBS DGA Research agency told the delegates that the drug misuse dropped in all categories between 2003 and 2007. In numbers it means that 11 per cent of the younger teenagers and 17.4 per cent of the older teens have used cannabis during the last 12 months in 2007. The misuse of amphetamines decreased to 2 per cent and 4.5 per cent respectively.

Representative of the Warsaw Metropolitan Police Andrzej Kulesza pointed out the role of his agency in the decrease of the illicit drugs consumption. The police carry out extensive drug preventive work in form of school patrols. They have also launched a program the name of which conveys a clear message: “React. Inform. Don’t tolerate”. According to the police, the number of drug-related crimes has also significantly decreased since last year, especially in the capital.

*By Pelle Olsson, Swedish journalist and conference participant*

## Facts: Research

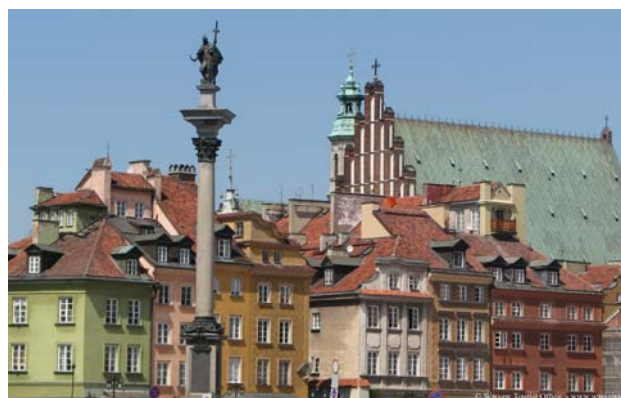
The Conference agenda focused on the research conducted by Warsaw University in cooperation with Warsaw School of Technology. The research was ordered by the Warsaw municipality.

Main objectives of the project include

- standardisation of the styles of life featuring Warsaw youth;
- matching relevant styles of life with dangers of using psychoactive substances by youth;
- diagnosis of the competences featuring adults working with youth, making decisions and/or coming out with public statements on this issue, and organising and conducting prevention activities among Warsaw youth;
- preparation of materials for discussions during the international ECAD conference which is devoted to socio-cultural grounds of prevention activities undertaken by various subjects among urban youth in Warsaw and other ECAD cities.

Authors: **Barbara Fatyga** and **Przemysław Zieliński**.

The report is available on [www.ecad.net](http://www.ecad.net) “Conference papers”



## Reflection over the ECAD Advisory Board's activities

ECAD is now 15 years in existence and we must ask ourselves continually are we making progress? Are we focusing our efforts and our limited resources in the right direction so that the commitment of many people across Europe who believe in the ECAD crusade is bearing fruit?

I can assure ECAD members that the Advisory Board is a group of well informed people who constantly engage in self-evaluation as to how we are steering this international organisation.

Issues brought up for discussions in 2008 included:

- how do we continue our campaign against the legalisation of drugs;
- how do we demonstrate our respect for and acceptance of different approaches to the drug problem in other cities/countries;
- how do we convince all member cities to pay their membership fee so that ECAD will have funds to expand its role and engage in research;
- how do we convince more European cities and capitals that they have a role to play in ECAD;
- how do we acknowledge our deep appreciation of the generosity of the city of Stockholm and strengthen our role as an international organisation.

**The Mayors' Conference is the opportunity for you, the representatives of cities and towns from across Europe, to let the Advisory Board know how you evaluate our performance.**

My Annual report as Chairman which is on the agenda for the ECAD Plenary Session, gives member cities a summary of the coordinating activities which your executive team have been engaged in over the past year.

## ECAD and UNGASS

ECAD's engagement in the work of the Vienna NGO Committee culminated on July 7-9, 2008 at the "Beyond 2008" - the Global NGO Forum on the 1998-2008 review of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on Illicit Drugs which took place at the United Nations Office in Vienna. The event included an exhibition to highlight NGO work and achievements on drug control. ECAD was represented by Åke Setréus, acting director, and Olga Vasiljeva, ECAD project coordinator from the city of Veliky Novgorod, Russia.

### Olga Vasiljeva comments on "Beyond 2008":

*"NGOs from all around the world addressing the drug related problems gathered in Vienna to discuss and to find a common ground on issues concerning threats posed by illicit drugs.*

*"The three-day Forum showed considerable differences between approaches to illicit drug issues applied by NGOs, which complicated the dialogue between the delegates. Nevertheless we could agree on some key positions.*

*"The active role of ECAD in the Beyond 2008 process is significant for future development of our organisation. ECAD represents a broad political force which is able to influence decisions made at the international level.*

*"I was glad to see that our colleagues from the San Patrignano Community, by their active participation in the discussions, could pass through additions concerning the importance of long-term rehabilitation. Representatives of San Patrignano carried strong conviction in the successfulness of their methods and woke a great interest to their approach among the participants. It is cheering to see that ECAD unites forces that can defend the idea of counteracting the illicit drug problems both in practice and in discussion."*



## Facts:

“Beyond 2008” gathered over 300 NGOs from across the world, gave recognition to the important contribution of civil society towards the 1998 UNGASS targets, and enabled them to express opinion and speak with a unified voice. It also marked an important milestone of NGO participation in formulation of international drug policy. The Forum ended with adoption of a global declaration and three resolutions which will be submitted to the UNGASS Ministerial Session in 2009. The Declaration highlights what has been achieved by NGOs, and identifies opportunities for future cooperation and collaboration between governments, NGOs, IGOs, and civil society partners in the post-UNGASS period.

The Declaration is available at [www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org)

By UNODC

## World Forum Against Drugs

ECAD was member of the organising committee of the First World Forum Against Drugs which took place on September 8-10, 2008 in Stockholm.

This global forum was the first of its kind at which NGOs, self-help groups, treatment centres, academics, municipal and regional authorities, politicians and other decision-makers, private individuals, the business community and others from around the world have got the opportunity to meet in order to express ideas and share experiences about how to work successfully against illicit drugs.

Eleven Swedish national organisations (including ECAD) and co-partners have taken the initiative to organise this forum. Their first goal was to reach out around the globe, especially the grass-roots NGOs that are working hard to reduce drug abuse and illicit drugs trafficking. As a result of their efforts, 82 countries from 5 continents were represented at the 1<sup>st</sup> World Forum Against Drugs.

One of the explanations for this overwhelmingly positive response is the great need for an active community of people committed to effective drug abuse prevention.

Another important goal of the World Forum Against Drug was to send a message to the upcoming UNGASS Ministerial Session on narcotic drugs (March 2009) that there is strong popular support from around the world for the UN Conventions on Narcotic Drugs.

The First World Forum Against Drugs ended in the closing session by launching a global, active and ongoing network of organisations united behind the UN Conventions on Narcotic Drugs. One of the tasks for this new global network will be to organise a series of future world conferences against drug use and trafficking.

World Forum Against Drugs is a non-political movement; its only aim is to work for the vision of a drug free world, and to protect the human rights of drug prevention.

The Declaration is available on [www.wfad08.org](http://www.wfad08.org)



Photo Marcus Haggström

Photo left: Andreas Petrou, Mayor of Aglantzia, Bo Bladholm, Chairman of the Stockholm City Council, Yiangou Chariton, Aglantzia; right: signing of the WFAD Declaration

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Delegates of the World Forum Against Drugs got the opportunity to visit the ECAD city of Gävle which offered to present its approach to counteracting drug problems for the international guests. Gävle with 69,000 inhabitants is very active within different European networks and is one of the leading cities within ECAD.

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” *I like the Swedish drug policy and went here to learn more about the way the municipalities work with drug issues.*”

*“They have shown us many examples and good statistical data. Now I understand why their work gives results.”*

Sahibzada Fazal Haq Afridi, Chairman of a drug prevention organisation from Pakistan

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## ECAD in Sweden

ECAD is one of the organisers of the Conference and Fair “Sweden Against Drugs” which will take place in the city of Örebro on May 13-14, 2009.

Conference and Fair “Sweden Against Drugs” is one of the biggest national manifestations of the Swedish drug policy, taking place every other year since 1993. Each time a different topic is chosen to focus the activities of the event. “Sweden Against Drugs” has become an important meeting point for everyone who works against drugs and their consequences for the individuals and the society. Here they can meet, share their experiences, discuss topical questions and learn about latest findings within their area of interest.

Among the organisers of the Conference and Fair “Sweden Against Drugs” – authorities and organisations which represent prevention, treatment/rehabilitation and law enforcement within the drug field.

## Network activities

### Balkan

The ECAD Balkan office is located in Burgas, Bulgaria and is led by Dr. Ivaylo Dimitrov.

The 2008 activities were directed towards expanding the network, which in the beginning of 2009 included 13 cities.

The National Conference of Bulgarian cities took place on September 25-26, 2008. About 80 delegates discussed municipal drug prevention programmes.

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” *Some speakers have mentioned here at the conference that we should not be ideological in our work. But I say that we should not be afraid of ideology, since there is no contradiction between ideology and scientific approach. Ideology stands for different values that researchers need to take into account and be aware of while undertaking research in social or political field. Ideology is a stand point from where we conduct our every day duties and make decisions. In our field, non-ideological ‘pure facts’ or, in other words, facts with no connection to any system of values, is nonsense.”*

Georgi Zazulin, Director ECAD Russia, debates in Warsaw

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### Norway

The Norwegian network had its annual meeting on January 9, 2009. About 20 representatives of Trondheim, Oslo, Stavanger, Bergen, Kristiansand and Drammen met to discuss issues of current interest and future engagement of the Norwegian cities in ECAD.

Norwegian government proposal to introduce drug injection rooms resp. legal prescription of heroin evoked an intensive discussion. The delegates agreed that this was undesirable development and a number of solid arguments against injection rooms and legal prescription were brought forward.

ECAD Director Jörgen Svidén took part in the meeting. He pointed out that ECAD strives to a higher degree than today to be a knowledge-based organisation, with one of the main tasks being to disseminate examples of best practice and successful methods to the members. The cities have both a lack of knowledge in the drug-related issues and a thirst for knowledge, and ECAD is aimed to bridge this gap - there is no other organisation in Europe directly addressing these issues. Jörgen Svidén emphasised further that ECAD in future has no intention to condemn different methods to cope with drug problems, which some of the Norwegian cities have experienced. What unites the cities in ECAD is their determination to strive at a drug free society, and in this regard different methods deserve to be met with respect. The Norwegian delegates have expressed their unanimous support to this view on ECAD's work.

## Latvia

Activities of the ECAD office in Latvia are led by its Director Andrejs Vilks. One of the significant activities included practical arrangement of two seminars within the Law Enforcement Around the Baltic Sea Cooperation which took place in Riga in May and September.

This year's subject - overcoming cooperation obstacles - is a complex issue which demanded two separate meetings: one for law enforcement representatives and one for researchers. The outcome of both meetings is highly satisfying. The participants could find a common language and put aside 'politically correct' answers in favour of practical, solution-oriented discussions. The report from these seminars and the final meeting which took place in St. Petersburg in November will be available through the ECAD office in Stockholm.

## Sweden

Swedish network carries out various activities during a year.

The education for drug coordinators offered to the network members by ECAD finished in June 2008 with a study visit to the ECAD office in St. Petersburg.

The education was a success. During a series of meetings the participants got in-depth understanding of topical issues. They also got a chance to discuss in the peer group the questions of concern for their every day anti-drug work.

### Facts:

Umeå, a city of 112,000 inhabitants (of them 29,000 are students) is situated in the northern part of Sweden. Umeå invests 10 million Swedish crowns (920,000 Euro) yearly in drug prevention. The anti-drug work is guided by the motto "It should be difficult to misuse drugs but easy to get treatment".

The annual conference of the Swedish network took place in Umeå on October 2-3, 2008. About 60 drug coordinators and municipal representatives discussed various topics, from measures to reduce



availability of illicit drugs in the region of the Barents Sea to cooperation between different authorities and organisations in the local anti-drug field work.

ECAD Sweden continues with its praiseworthy initiative to award the prize "ECAD Sweden contribution of the year".

The proud prize winners of 2008 were two school curators, Cina Persman och Christer Lundsten, from School department at the municipality of Örebro. Since 2001 they have carried out surveys on drug problems among the upper secondary school students. What has once started as training for school staff, from technicians to principals, has become a close cooperation between social service, school, parents and pupils.

A sub network, ECAD Gävleborg which unites 10 neighbouring communities, arranged its regular autumn conference on November 26, 2008 in Bollnäs. Current issues of international drug policy and reducing the availability of drugs at local level were discussed.

## Facts

Bollnäs with 26,000 inhabitants is situated in the middle of Sweden.

About 100 participants representing the regions schools, social services and the police gathered at the ECAD Gävleborg autumn conference.

” *Drug situation changes very quickly and we must react accordingly. We cannot rely on a process that might take a couple of years to set going but should do things at a fast pace.*”

Torgny Peterson, independent expert on drugs, conference speaker

## Russia

The conferences in Swedish Bollnäs and Russian network conference in Stavropol are great examples of cooperation between the networks within ECAD. Georgi Zazulin, the ECAD Director in Russia, participated in the conference of ECAD Gävleborg.

Two representatives of the network ECAD Gävleborg, Sven Persson and Marcus Häggström, participated in a conference "Drug-safe Cities vs. Cities surrendered to drugs - experience exchange between Russian cities" which took place on October 30-31 in Stavropol, in the Caucasus area in the Southern Russia. The conference attracted 350 delegates from many regions of Russia and received a broad coverage.

Sven and Marcus presented an overview of the successful Swedish drug policy at the plenary session. During the seminar on the next day they could give a detailed description of how prevention works on a local level in their respective cities of Gävle and Söderhamn.

Sven Persson told the seminar participants that the municipality of Gävle annually evaluates the effects of the drug preventive work. The activities are carried out in accordance with the city's action plan "Step by step to a drug-free society". Söderhamn invested lately great resources in the youth preventive programme. It includes regular surveys, development of youth creative centres and a youth help service for young people in need.

The network ECAD Gävleborg takes an active part in the ECAD research and prevention programme "Youth in Europe" which Sven and Marcus have also shed light on.



Photo Marcus Häggström



Russia is still suffering from the devastating consequences of the swinging drug policy of the last 15 years, when, against a background of a drug epidemic that spread throughout the country, the drug legislation went from a restrictive one to a liberal (even possession of up to 1 g of heroin for own use has been made legal in 2004!) and then back to a restrictive again. The country needs to build up its system of drug prevention on local level with coordination of efforts as a primary goal, the conclusion of the conference was. In this regard the Swedish experience is of great interest.



Georgi Zazulin, Director of the ECAD Regional office in Russia, presented a new book where the Swedish drug policy model is explained with regard to the interests of Russian readers.

The two intensive days of the conference gave the Russian and Swedish colleagues the opportunity not only to meet and exchange experiences but also to enjoy the genuine Russian hospitality which Stavropol demonstrated so heartily.

## Project work

Since 1997 ECAD has been using the opportunity provided by the Swedish International Development Agency, SIDA, in order to develop and strengthen the Russian network. Our three-year project in the area of anti-drug management, education and networking finished in November 2008. During 2005-2008 we conducted 15 seminars; 5 network conferences in 4 Russian cities; 3 seminars and a conference within the network *Law Enforcement around the Baltic Sea*; 25 students received Master Degree in "Drug Conflictology". Totally around 1800 people participated in the ECAD seminars and conferences, among them municipal workers from many Russian cities and regions; representatives for the Russian law enforcement authorities, including Federal Drug Control Service; representatives for various Federal bodies; NGOs representatives; students and journalists. Main achievements of the project relate to the strengthening of the network of the Russian ECAD cities and institutionalization of drug management/drug coordination as a regular academic discipline. The project in whole was successful.

The ECAD network in Russia will continue its activities even after the project closure.

ECAD looks now into the possibilities to make the education for drug co-ordinators and municipal workers internet-based in order to broaden access to this form of raising of professional skills for our members.

ECAD is interested in increasing its project activities with support of European and National financing agencies. ECAD sees its project activities as an important tool for *promoting by action* of our vision of drug free Europe.

## Civil Society Forum on Drugs, EU Commission

ECAD follows up the development and actively participates in the debates.

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## Youth in Europe

The “Youth in Europe – A drug prevention programme” was launched in 2005. Its methodology is based on the successful, exemplary programme “Drug Free Iceland”. The main focus of “Youth in Europe” is to reduce substance abuse amongst adolescents in Europe. That is why it includes two steps:

- survey on drugs prevalence and attitudes towards drugs among youth, in order to motivate cities to develop their prevention strategies based on evidence,
- and mobilisation of society, parents, teachers and students as the key to the success of any drug prevention programme.

The Programme is coordinated from Reykjavik, [www.youthineurope.org](http://www.youthineurope.org)

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” We are many and hopefully we will become more. Together we possess a great stock of knowledge and experience which we can share with each other and spread to our neighbours. Our goal is to strengthen ECAD as a knowledge-based organisation.”

Jörgen Svidén, ECAD Director

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## Conclusion

Since August 2008, ECAD’s executive team in Stockholm works under the leadership of a new director, Jörgen Svidén. I would like to thank our deputy director Åke Setréus for his excellent performance in running the office and representing ECAD on the international arena during the transition period from April to August.

ECAD is moving into the new year of work in the spirit of change.

ECAD is strong but needs to become even stronger and influential representative for our member cities at the international level and even better helping hand at the local level. Together we can come closer to our vision of Europe with marginalised drug problems.

*Jim Corr, Chairman*



*Photo left: Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor Brian Bermingham, Jim Corr, Jörgen Svidén  
Photo right: Advisory Board meeting in Cork, October 2008*

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