

INTRODUCTION

The *Beckley/Foresight Seminar on Future Policy Challenges* was held on 22 November 2005, the day after the Beckley Foundation's *Global Drug Policy Seminar 2005*.

The session was introduced by Amanda Neidpath of the Beckley Foundation, who had organised the day at the invitation of Foresight. She stressed that despite the current UN drug strategy to reduce, and ideally to eliminate illicit drugs, the stark reality is that the global market has continued to expand, year by year. Against this background, the UK Government's Foresight programme has recognised that in the 21st century psychoactive substances, including cognitive enhancers and recreational drugs, are a fact of life, and need to be managed wisely.

The aim of the day was to review and, ideally, enhance the *Report on Brain Sciences, Drugs and Addiction*, produced by Foresight. The hope is that such a review would help to consider how psychoactive substances can best be managed to minimise their harm, and to explore their potential benefit for the individual, the community and society.

Lord Layard, Professor Emeritus of Economics at the London School of Economics, UK, and a member of the Foresight project stakeholder group, introduced the day. He was pleased that the project did not solely focus on recreational drugs and the problems of addiction but also on how we can benefit from better drugs for treating mental illness, and from cognition enhancers.