

THE BECKLEY FOUNDATION

BECKLEY FOUNDATION GLOBAL DRUG POLICY SEMINAR 2005 HOUSE OF LORDS, PALACE OF WESTMINSTER, LONDON 20-22 NOVEMBER 2005

INTERNATIONAL DRUG POLICY CONSORTIUM MEETINGS SUNDAY 20 NOVEMBER AND TUESDAY 22 NOVEMBER VENUES TO BE CONFIRMED

In November, the Consortium will have been in existence for almost a year. It currently has 23 NGO members from around the world, who have agreed to work together to promote evidence-based and effective drug policies to governments and international agencies. Specific pieces of work have been undertaken around the 2005 Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the UNAIDS Prevention Strategy, and the European Union Drug Strategy. The Consortium has also provided advice on drug policy issues to the national governments of Ireland, Portugal and Russia, with planned pieces of work in Hungary, Spain and the Ukraine later in the year. As the workload increases, we will need to meet as a group to discuss a more formal structure and operating system to take us into 2006, and to agree a set of priorities and a work plan for the coming year. This meeting is scheduled for Sunday 20 November, from 2.00pm to 5.00pm, at the Jolly Hotel St. Ermins, close to the House of Lords. There will be a complimentary lunch reception before this meeting with members of the Beckley Foundation's other initiative, the *International Network for Drug Policy Analysis*. One delegate from each Consortium member is invited.

We have found in our early communications with governments that politicians and officials are receptive to approaches from the Consortium, particularly where we are offering access to expertise that they do not have, and are making positive proposals for improved policies and programmes. This should give us some encouragement that the development of productive relationships is possible. The most important review of drug policy will take place at the UN Special Session on drugs in 2008. It is important that the NGO input to that session is well planned and carefully targeted if it is to have any impact. A number of NGO initiatives will emerge around the world in the next two years with the aim of influencing the 2008 decisions. We want to use this gathering of Consortium members (and a few other key NGO partners) to discuss ways to maximise the NGO influence, and to start the process of preparation for 2008. A meeting will be hosted by the Consortium for this purpose on Tuesday 22 November, from 10.30am to 1.00pm. One delegate from each Consortium member is invited, and representatives from other relevant NGOs will also be present.