

APFAD 2015

Speakers' Profile and Presentation Summary

1. The Road to UNGASS 2016

Mr Erik Leijonmarck, Secretary General at European Cities Against Drugs (ECAD)

Besides having published numerous publications on drugs, organised crime and human trafficking, Mr Leijonmarck is also a member of the European Consortium of Political Research's Standing Group on Organised Crime.



Mr Leijonmarck conducts lectures for the public sector and civil society on drug prevention and drug policy options. Being an active participant in the contemporary debate on drug policy in Sweden, mainly in the cannabis field, Mr Leijonmarck is also currently preparing ECAD for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on Drugs 2016. Together, Mr Leijonmarck, NCADA, and participants at APFAD will work towards fighting the drug legalisation debate at UNGASS 2016.

Synopsis of Mr Leijonmarck's presentation at APFAD:

UNGASS 2016 is a milestone to 2019 when a new plan will be drafted for addressing the world drug problem. The evaluation of what the world is currently doing will impact the way we perceive the problem ahead.

Advocates of legalisation of (some or all) illicit drugs are working hard to frame our current policies as:

1. Counterproductive i.e. they are not working
2. In violation of other legal obligations by states, especially the charters of human rights
3. Threatening the development and stability of member states

If they succeed in making the following analysis commonly accepted by the UN member states, they will use that as a platform to stage an assault on the conventions in 2019.

As the UN prepares for the UNGASS in 2016, it is important to challenge the validity of these assumptions and suggest concrete and meaningful steps that member states can take to improve efforts and better counteract their drug problems.

Mr Erik Leijonmarck's presentation covered all of the assumptions described above and provide input to how we, who believe in the ideal of a drug-free world, should constructively engage in the global drug policy debate.

2. New challenges in the anti-drug scene – Cannabis

Mr Kevin Sabet, Director, Drug Policy Institute, and Assistant Professor, University of Florida, College of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry.



Mr Sabet received his Doctorate of Philosophy and Masters of Science from Oxford University as a Marshall Scholar in 2007 and 2002, respectively, and his B.A. with high honors in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley in 2001.

As an author, consultant and advisor to three US presidential administrations, Dr Sabet has studied, researched, wrote, and implemented drug policies for nearly 20 years. A drug policy and expert in cannabis, Dr Sabet has been featured on the front page of the New York Times and in virtually every major media publication and news channel on the subject of drug policy.

Dr Sabet also advises several NGOs working to reduce drug abuse and its consequences, and serves in an international role as an advisor, in various capacities, to the United Nations and other multi-national organizations.

Synopsis of Dr Sabet's presentation at APFAD:

Dr Kevin Sabet's presentation is based on his book "Reefer Sanity: Seven Great Myths About Marijuana" (<http://www.reefersanitty.net/>). In his presentation, Dr Sabet provided an overview of the current drug policy trends with regards to marijuana, and debunk some of the most cited myths about marijuana use, for instance: marijuana is harmless and non-addictive, and legalisation will solve the government's budgetary problems.

Dr Sabet makes the claim that our greatest concern should be the inevitable rise of a second Big Tobacco industry, this time marketing marijuana to our children and youth. He referred to the already arising problems in Colorado and Washington State as examples. Dr Sabet's presentation concluded with an overview of our policy options, describing a smarter, science-based approach to marijuana policy that neither legalises marijuana nor demonizes its users.

3. Designing Effective Campaigns for Youths

Ms Vasuki D/o Utravathy, Deputy Director, Strategic Planning and Collaboration Department, Health Promotion Board, Singapore

Ms Vasuki Utravathy is now helming the Strategic Planning and Collaboration Department in Singapore's Health Promotion Board. Until 31 July 2015, she was overseeing the Substance Abuse Department in the Board. The Health Promotion Board, a statutory board under the purview of the Ministry of Health, helms the national tobacco control strategy in Singapore.



Besides looking into tobacco control policy and programme development in Singapore, the HPB has also been providing consultancy services in the ASEAN region, assisting countries like Vietnam and Indonesia develop their officers' tobacco control policy and programme capability.

Ms Vasuki has been with the Health Promotion Board since she graduated from the National University of Singapore in 2002. In 2005, she obtained a Master in Health Service Management from the Flinders University. In 2007, Ms Vasuki was awarded the Board's scholarship to pursue a postgraduate degree in Public Health. She graduated with a Master of Public Health from the National University of Singapore in 2010.

Synopsis of Ms Vasuki's presentation at APFAD:

Neil Gaiman, English author wrote in his book 'M is for Magic', "Stories you read when you're the right age never quite leave you". You may forget who wrote them or what the story was called. Sometimes you'll forget precisely what happened, but if a story touches you it will stay with you, haunting the places in your mind that you rarely ever visit."

Youth-centred social interventions seek to do just this for practitioners and policymakers are acutely aware that critical lessons learnt early in life stays with the individual for life. This presentation provided an overview of intentionally designed youth-focused programmes, identifies the critical success factors for social marketing interventions that are effective in changing youth behaviour as well as learnings on 'what-not-to-do' when design social interventions for youth.

4. Behavioural Analysis of New and Young Drug Offenders in Singapore

Dr. Jasmin Kaur, Senior Assistant Director, Correctional Research, Singapore Prison Service



Dr Jasmin Kaur is a senior psychologist and Senior Assistant Director in the Correctional Research Branch within the Singapore Prison Service (SPS). She conducts research on offending patterns, forensic risk assessment tools, and understanding offending behaviour, specifically drug offenders and violent offenders. In addition to her research portfolio, she has been a practicing clinician for over 10 years, seeing clients with a variety of behavioural difficulties and mental health issues. Her work has included group interventions for personality-disordered and violent offenders. Dr Jasmin Kaur holds a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology from James Cook University, Australia.

Synopsis of Dr Kaur's presentation at APFAD:

This presentation highlighted the key findings from a research study on young abusers, commissioned by the Task Force on Youths and Drugs which was co-chaired by Minister, Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Home Affairs and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Masagos Zulkifli, and Minister of State for Education, Ms Sim Ann.

The study examined risks factors leading to drug initiation, and perceptions towards preventive drug education in young drug abusers and non-abusers in Singapore. One key finding from the study was the two distinct profiles of drug abusers, i.e. cannabis abusers and abusers of other drugs. The study also found risk factors, such as underage smoking and specific liberal attitudes towards drug use, related to drug initiation in youths. This presentation also highlighted the key features of effective preventive drug education (PDE) and specific areas in which PDE could be enhanced, based on youths' perspectives from the surveys, focus group discussions and interviews.

5. Asian Perspective and Sri Lankan Experience of Dealing with Drug Issues through Community Intervention and Policy Development

Mr Pubudu Sumanasekara, Vice-President, IOGT International and Executive Director, Alcohol and Drug Information Centre (ADIC), Sri Lanka



Mr Pubudu completed his Health Promotion studies in Canada and Social Work studies in India. He is a visiting lecturer at the University of Colombo and Rajarata in Sri Lanka.

Mr Pubudu has extensive involvement in community-based projects local and international aimed at developing strategies to change behaviours and presented papers in many international conferences. He likes to work in challenging environments and experiment innovative and effective interventions for drug prevention.

Synopsis of Mr Pubudu's presentation at APFAD:

This presentation focused on IOGT's sharing and observations from the Asian perspective and Sri Lankan experience of dealing with the drug issue through community intervention and policy development.

The presentation also delved into the notable learning points from this experience and how it could be universally applicable to different communities.

6. ICCE's Perspective: A Holistic Response to Preventive Education, Treatment and Rehabilitation

Mr Tay Bian How, Director of the International Centre for Certification and Education of Addiction Professionals (ICCE), Colombo Plan Secretariat



Since assuming the position as Director of Colombo Plan International Centre for Credentialing and Education of Addiction Professionals (ICCE) in 2009, Mr Tay Bian How oversees the development of training curricula and initiatives aimed at professionalising the demand reduction workforce in 40 countries across the globe where the Universal Prevention Curriculum for Substance Use (UPC), and Universal Treatment for Substance Use Disorders (UTC) are currently being conducted.

Mr Tay's tertiary education qualifications include Masters in Public Administration, postgraduate Diploma in Public Management, postgraduate Diploma in Public Administration and Bachelor of Social Science with Honours. At the professional level, he holds two credentials – National Certified Addiction Counsellor 1 (NCAC 1) and International Certified Addiction Professional III (ICAP III). He is also a Commissioner for the National Certification Commission of Addiction Professionals (NCC AP), USA, besides serving as a member on the International Advisory Panels - INL, UNODC, OAS and CP - to review the UPC and UTC.

Upholding his philosophy, “We document what we do, We do what we document”, Mr Tay has written numerous articles pertaining to drug demand reduction-related issues and substance use and abuse. Besides this, he has also been appointed a member of the International Editorial Panel to the UK-based International Journal of Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy. Currently, he is the Chairman of the Advisory Board and a member of the Management Board of the Colombo Plan International Journal of Prevention and Treatment of Substance Use Disorders.

Synopsis of Mr Tay's presentation at APFAD:

Mr Tay Bian How shared on Colombo Plan's expertise in the areas of training and professionalising the prevention and treatment workforce. In particular, he presented on the whole range of programmes and curriculum available at the ICCE, including the Universal Prevention Curriculum for Substance Use (UPC), and the Universal Treatment for Substance Use Disorders (UTC), as well as the ICCE credentialing system of addiction professionals.

7. Reintegration and Aftercare: Challenges and Future Direction

Mr Abdul Karim, *Executive Director, Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA)*



In 1986, Mr Abdul Karim was awarded the Local Merit Scholar (LMS) by the Public Service Commission (PSC) and joined the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) in 1989 upon graduation.

During his previous appointment as Deputy Director in the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Division at the SPS from 2011 to 2013, Mr Abdul Karim made contributions in the areas of mobilising community support for offenders' rehabilitation and reintegration.

With more than 20 years of experience as a Senior Prison Officer, Mr Abdul Karim has extensive experience in planning and implementing rehabilitation programmes and counselling for offenders.

The Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA) has been actively involved in the anti-drug cause for over 42 years. SANA focuses on providing preventive drug education to students and the community to promote a drug-free Singapore. It also provides aftercare support for drug offenders who are approaching release and after their release through providing individual support to them through case management.

With SANA's expertise in rehabilitation and treatment from a ground perspective, SANA will be speaking on the topic of 'Preventive Education, Treatment and Rehabilitation – Sharing by a Practitioner.'

Synopsis of Mr Abdul Karim's presentation at APFAD:

Each year, the Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA) Aftercare Team handles more than 400 cases of those who are released from a drug rehabilitation centre and need continued Aftercare support. Drug offenders released from prisons often face a variety of challenges that may hinder their ability to become law abiding citizens.

This presentation examined some of these challenges and presents case examples of two of them who manage to overcome their challenges to be successful role models and contribute back to society.

The presentation also covered how SANA's new initiative in setting up a "Drop-In Centre" is expected to strengthen the continuum of interventions and support programmes for those who are released from prisons as well as for parents and members of the public seeking assistance for issues related to drug addiction.