

Dear Mayor, excellences, organisers, speakers and participants. On behalf of ECAD it's a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to the 25th ECAD Mayors Conference here in Gothenburg, Sweden. We are happy to arrange this year's conference together with The World Federation Against Drugs and Sverige mot Narkotika.

Last year we were gathered in the city of Kaunas in Lithuania. We spoke about preventing drugs, protecting health and policing crime. I remember that conference with joy and I hope the conference also became a boost to the city to work against drugs.

This year our focus will be on the following; Prevent Don't promote, Mobilize communities, Rediscover Recovery. We will focus on primary prevention after the Islandic model. We will also present a new project called Recovery Cities.

Preventing problems in their infancy is more efficient than mitigating their harms when fully matured. It is much more difficult to repair what's broken than to prevent problems from emanating. But it's possible and it is a work we also have to do. We must never give up on persons addicted to drugs and we need to help them to full recovery.

This conference gathers leading world experts on prevention strategies as well as treatment and recovery from addiction. Their knowledge is of great value to us. But knowledge doesn't matter if we do not manage to put it into use and implement what we learn back at home in our cities.

It is inspiring to meet people from all over the world cares about drug issues. We can learn a lot from each other by talking together and discuss how we solve our problems.

I want to thank the city of Gothenburg for hosting the conference and I look forward to two interesting days. Read the program book and chose what you find most interesting and useful for you and your city.

I wish you all a good and inspiring conference. Thank for your attention!