



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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CORDROGUE 80

NOTE

from :	Presidency
to :	Horizontal Working Party on Drugs
Subject :	Summary of discussions EU National Drugs Coordinators Meeting 24 October 2007, Lisbon

I. Background information

1. Under the EU Action Plan on Drugs 2005-2008, adopted in June 2005 on the basis of the EU Drugs Strategy 2005-2012, the Presidency-in-office should provide the opportunity to those responsible for drugs coordination to meet to exchange information on national and Community-wide developments and to review the scope for stepping up cooperation.
2. The Portuguese Presidency of the EU Council accordingly hosted a meeting of EU national drugs coordinators, in Lisbon, on the 24 October 2007 to exchange views and experience at EU level. The meeting was chaired by Mr. João Goulão (Portuguese National Drugs Coordinator and Chairman of the Portuguese Institute on Drugs and Drug Addiction and Chairman of the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs).
3. In addition to Member States' delegations and representatives of the EU institutions (the European Commission, the Council Secretariat and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction), the meeting was also attended by Mr. Andrés Fingerut from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

II. Proceedings and programme

1. Agenda item: Update on Coordination Mechanisms

The EMCDDA representative presented a general overview of the national drug coordination in EU Member States. Data collected by EMCDDA showed that most Member States have a national drug strategy and/or action plan and an evaluation or monitoring mechanism.

The majority of national drug coordination mechanisms in the EU have three levels:

- a strategic coordination body
- an operative day-to-day body
- some regional and/or municipal coordination body.

The EMCDDA representative finalised his presentation with 3 main conclusions:

- drug coordination in the EU has reached important goals
- coordination mechanisms in EU Member States are more and more devoted to the management of the implementation of the drug strategy
- there are no simple indicators of effectiveness for drug coordination but there are several components which can be linked with an effective coordination body or mechanism.

At the start of the meeting, the Presidency circulated some questions on the implementation and effects of drug coordination to stimulate the discussion. Mr. João Goulão presented the answers to those questions and some brief remarks on the Portuguese coordination mechanism on drugs.

Several delegations referred to their national coordination mechanisms and stressed the need to involve in coordination bodies the Ministries of Foreign Affairs because the European Commission and Member States are the major international donors.

2. Agenda item: UNGASS assessment process: exchange of views

The meeting discussed the on-going preparations for the UNGASS process review.

The Commission highlighted that the overall objective of the United Nations approach to drugs should be to get the European model accepted, i.e. a multidisciplinary, balanced approach based on evidence. But one model can not be applied to the entire world. Regional variations should be accepted. It was also stressed that drug policies should comply with international human rights conventions.

The UNODC representative presented an overview of the measures taken by United Nations Member States to counter the world drug problem.

The Presidency informed that HDG has started working on an EU position. Namely, it started to discuss EU preferences with regard to a number of procedural aspects to be included in the resolution that EU intends to table at the next CND and which should be reflected in the final outcome document in 2009.

3. Agenda item: Cocaine use and provision of treatment services

The EMCDDA presented a policy briefing on “Cocaine use and provision of treatment services”, which was made available to all the participants in the meeting.

The EMCDDA representative presented an overview on the cocaine use in the EU and the treatment provision to cocaine users available in EU Member States. Often cocaine is the second most used drug after Cannabis: 3.5% of all adults (12 million people) have use cocaine once. Prevalence is higher in UK and Spain. Consumption and need for treatment is increasing. Health problems related to cocaine are not very well defined and as regard treatment, no substitution is available.

The EMCDDA representative concluded his presentation with the following conclusions:

- Information on risks and general prevention should reach all
- Interventions have to follow local and regional needs
- Facilities for opiate users reach a relevant number of cocaine users as well, but adaptation to this group may be necessary
- Local specific cocaine and crack strategies may be needed
- Specific treatment interventions have to be further developed and evaluated
- Best practice in psychosocial interventions and new approaches have to be further developed and results disseminated
- Cocaine use has to be seen in the framework of the growing polydrug patterns of use.

As a way forward information on prevention should be made available and heroin treatment centres should adapt to cocaine users specific needs.

The meeting took note of the presentations of treatment experts from Portugal, Ireland, Netherlands and Italy. It was agreed that exchange of best practices and experiences should be continued.

4. Agenda item: Any other business:

- **EU drugs matrix of assistance on drugs to third countries 2005 EU-LAC drug treatment city program**

Coordinators welcomed the matrix drawn up by the Commission on drugs assistance of Commission and Member States to third countries. The sate of projects is 760 million Euros (more than 55% of the funding is by the European Commission and 90% projects are for Afghanistan, Peru, Bolivia and Colombia).

- **EU-LAC Drug Treatment City Program**

The Commission representative presented an innovative programme that CICAD is developing to create partnerships among cities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean to exchange best practices in drug treatment. This project is funded by the Commission for a three year period.

The Commission asked Member States to consider their participation in this initiative, as mentioned in the Letter that CICAD addressed to all EU Member States.

- **Pan-European Conference on the fight against doping in sport**

Taking advantage of the fact that this Conference was taking place in the same venue as the NDC meeting, a member of the Portuguese Anti-Doping Council presented the final Recommendations of the Conference. Special reference was made to the use of prohibited substances by gym users and youngsters in the EU and the restrictions of availability of prohibited substances and methods in sport.

III. Concluding remarks

The meeting proved its usefulness as a forum for discussing major drugs problems.

It was reaffirmed that coordination mechanisms are a key element for the national and European policies on drugs.

As regards the UNGASS process review a need for a common European position was stressed.

Concerning cocaine there is a pressing need for action as cocaine use has increased considerably and plays a role in a number of different user groups and specific treatment interventions have to be further developed and evaluated.

The various presentations gave the opportunity for in-depth discussion of national and EU-wide developments in the drugs field.
