



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 19 January 2012

5477/12

**CORDROGUE 1
COLAT 1
AMLAT 2**

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

Of:	Meeting of Technical Committee of the EU/LAC Mechanism on Drugs
On:	15 December 2011
Subject:	Summary of discussions

1. Adoption of the agenda

The meeting adopted the agenda as set out in doc. CM 5678/11.

2. Commission Communication "Towards a stronger European response to drugs"

A representative of the COM presented the above-mentioned communication, contained in doc. 15983/11 JAI 769 CORDROGUE 70 SAN 211, which summarises the current drug related threats and enumerates the legislative and other initiatives to be taken by the COM in the forthcoming years. Answering to a question about the new projects, the speaker noted that there were other means to develop cooperation, not only by initiating new projects. She mentioned the reinforcement of judicial cooperation as a field where such cooperation could be developed.

A representative of the EEAS noted that Commission Communication highlighted two different principles of international cooperation to be followed - a comprehensive approach, an example of which was the COPPOLAD project, and the route approach with currently two main routes (cocaine route and heroin route) established.

3. EMCDDA annual report 2011 on drug situation in Europe

The EU co-presidency presented the latest statistics on the drug situation in Europe in 2011, contained in the EMCDDA annual report 2011 (doc. 17139/11 CORDROGUE 78 ADD 1) saying that drug use in Europe appeared to be relatively stable, with levels of use remaining high, but not rising overall, and that in some important areas, such as cannabis use by young people, recent data showed positive changes. However, developments in the synthetic drugs market were worrying, and polydrug use had become a serious issue.

4. Update on the implementation of COPOLAD project

– Overview of the activities in each component

A representative of COPOLAD reminded that the aim of COPOLAD was to help to gather drug-related evidence with a view to developing evidence-based and not ideology-based antidrug policies in Latin American countries and gave an overview of the progress made in each component of the project. In the framework of component 1, the examination of the initial situation in different drug-related fields was started and COPOLAD website was created. Among the activities conducted in the framework of component 2, work was being done to reach an agreement on a number of drug related indicators which were essential for evidence-based policy. To achieve that, all the existing indicators were reviewed and the first meeting aiming to agree on minimum indicators could probably be organised in March 2012. As regards component 3, following the example of the EU, COPOLAD was working on the identification of minimum quality standards in drug demand reduction. In the framework of component 4, a study was undertaken to analyse the possibilities and sustainability of alternative development, and an international conference on synthetic drugs was organised allowing to exchange information and good practices on fighting against trafficking and consumption of synthetic drugs. The speaker also presented COPOLAD activities to be conducted in the near future.

– *Presentation of the COPOLAD website*

A representative of COPOLAD gave an overview of COPOLAD website, its contents and functionalities. The website, available in English and Spanish, contained all the documents and information on the activities undertaken in the framework of the project as well as the COPOLAD newsletter, published on a quarterly basis. The meeting was informed that the website would provide a lot of information about the COPOLAD programme, would allow requesting further information by filling in a relevant form online and also making a search of all Latin American centres working in the field of drug demand reduction. The speaker asked the delegates to propose improvements for the website and to include all the links that might be useful. Some delegations noted that the development of this website would be useful for the EU-LAC mechanism on drugs.

The representatives of COPOLAD informed the delegates that they would be happy to participate in all EU-LAC technical committee meetings where the delegations would find their participation important. They also invited the delegations to participate in the annual COPOLAD conference which they were planning to organise straight after the EU-LAC high level meeting.

The delegations of the Caribbean countries were asked to provide the contacts of their national antidrug agencies by 15 January 2012 at the latest.

5. Ways to improve the EU-LAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs

The EU co-presidency presented the proposals on improving the Mechanism outlined in doc. DS 1825/11 noting that it was worth to consider a possibility to establish a broader calendar of the LAC co-presidencies, in which at least the next LAC co-presidency should be included as well as to introduce thematic debates during the EU-LAC technical committee meetings. The LAC co-presidency proposed organising video conferences which would allow the LAC countries to be properly represented at the expert level.

Some LAC countries welcomed the proposals, but explained that they needed more time to study them in depth. They mentioned the creation of the CELAC which should be the Latin American prolocutor with the EU in dialogues like this and the presidency of which could also take over the co-presidency of the Mechanism.

A representative of the EEAS noticed that thematic debates could be organised not only during the EU-LAC high level meeting, but also during the technical committee meetings. He also welcomed the launch of the CELAC initiative.

The EU co-president invited the EU and LAC countries to send their written contributions by 30 January 2012 at the latest on how to improve the Mechanism, to be included in a revised version of document DS 1825/11 for the next EU-LAC technical committee meeting.

6. Discussion on judicial cooperation between the EU and LAC countries in the field of drugs trafficking

The representative of the COM informed the meeting that a tender for completing a study on judicial cooperation, mutual legal assistance and extradition of drugs traffickers and other drugs-related crimes offenders between the EU, its Member States and LAC countries was published with a deadline of 4 January 2012. She explained that judicial cooperation between the EU and LAC already existed, but the study would allow to explore the existing cooperation, its achievements and difficulties and would enable to determine if there was room for improvement. The speaker also mentioned a possibility to have judicial cooperation as the topic for the forthcoming EU-LAC technical committee or high level meetings. The LAC co-presidency welcomed the initiation of this study and promised to urge the LAC countries to cooperate and provide all the information relevant for the study.

7. Overview of EU cooperation activities in LAC

A representative of the EEAS gave an update of the subregional EU initiatives for Central America, the Caribbean and Andean region reminding of the recently adopted Central American Security Strategy and informing the meeting that the EU was currently developing an ambitious project for Central America, worth 14 million euros. He also informed the delegates that the EEAS was finalising the EU strategy for the Caribbean, one pillar of which was dedicated to crime, security and drugs. The speaker presented the latest developments in national antidrug programmes implemented in Saint Kitts and Nevis, Jamaica and Haiti, which were financed by the European Development Fund and dedicated accordingly to the fight against the supply reduction, demand reduction and strengthening of judicial cooperation in drug-related cases.

The representative also spoke about the EU funded projects and forthcoming meetings with the Andean countries also mentioning that a few months ago a high level meeting was organised in La Paz where cocaine production and trafficking was addressed. He noted that while at national level the dialogue with these countries was very active, the same could not be said about the dialogue at subregional level and therefore encouraged Ecuador which would overtake the presidency of the Andean community to re-launch the dialogue with the EU.

8. Any other business

The EU co-presidency announced the dates of the forthcoming EU-LAC technical committee meetings and the possible date of the EU-LAC high level meeting and informed the delegates that the meetings would be further co-chaired by the Polish co-chairman.

A representative of Peru informed the meeting about their intentions to organise a high level international conference in Lima in 2012 concerning international cooperation in tackling drug problems and that the concrete topics of the conference were currently under discussion.
