



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 27 January 2012

5662/12

CORDROGUE 2

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

of: Meeting of the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs
on: 7 December 2011
Subject: Summary of discussions

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda set out in document CM 5674/11 was approved with addition of the following points under AOB:

- Praia action plan on drugs;
- European drug prevention quality standards conference.

2. Information concerning the proceedings of other EU bodies

A representative of the Custom Cooperation Working Party presented the Draft final report on Action 4.8 of the Fourth action plan to implement the strategy for customs cooperation in the third pillar, about improving cooperation in the fight against maritime drugs smuggling (doc. 11352/1/11 REV 1 ENFOCUSTOM 55, CORDROGUE 39, DAPIX 67). He explained that a project group was established to deal with this action, which focused on fast boats and identified a number of problems, such as non-existence of uniform procedures among customs services in the field of combating maritime smuggling and insufficiency of current customs cooperation to fight against this crime.

He also informed the delegates about a joint operation organised to deal with smuggling of tobacco and chemical precursors, which aimed at collecting information from railway transport borders with a view of using it to improve the fight against this kind of smuggling. 23 Member States participated in this operation, the report of which should be available later.

A representative of the EEAS presented the issues discussed during the recent meeting of the Working Party on Latin America and informed the delegates that the revitalisation of precursor agreements with Latin America would start soon in the form of joint follow-up groups between TAXUD and relevant Latin American countries.

The Presidency reported on the JHA-RELEX Ad Hoc Support Group meeting of 2 December 2011 during which a thematic debate on drugs was held and a document prepared by the Presidency on the expert dialogues on drugs was presented (see doc. 16144/11 CORDROGUE 73 RELEX 1114 COLAT 37 AMLAT 94).

3. Thematic debate "Regional cooperation as an effective tool for combating drug crime"

A representative of MAOC–N presented their activities informing the meeting that the independent evaluation conducted in 2009 demonstrated that the cooperation as it took place within MAOC-N was fast and flexible by European standards and that the functioning of MAOC-N was a success story. As a result of these activities over 65 tonnes of cocaine and over 47 tonnes cannabis were seized.

A representative of SELEC gave an overview of their activities reminding that an antidrug trafficking task force was set up in 2000 which proved to be one of the most successful task forces established within SELEC. He informed the meeting that the Balkan route remained of high importance and that opiates were still the most commonly smuggled drug with 13 967 kg heroin seized in 2010 (representing a 28.5% decline in comparison to 2009). During the same year 609 kg of cocaine and 90 tons of cannabis were also seized.

A representative of CECLAD explained that the centre was established to have a common operative structure involving the EU and third states bordering the Mediterranean sea. He clarified that the existing police cooperation agreements FR had with its partners were used as a basis for the centre's creation.

The LT delegation gave an overview of the activities of the Baltic Sea Taskforce on organised crime explaining that taskforce ensured the facilitation of regional cooperation in the Baltic sea region and focused on fighting such forms of crime which crossed the state borders. She also explained that efforts were made to further involve Russian authorities into intelligence operations of the taskforce, which was especially important as the operational agreement between the Russian Federation and Europol had not been signed yet. She also presented some examples of controlled delivery operations conducted by the taskforce and the PL delegate noted that its activities enabled to disrupt trafficking of BMK precursor from the Russian Federation to the EU.

Answering delegations' questions, the representatives of the regional organisations gave more details on their activities. The PL delegation noted that one of the factors contributing to the success of these regional organisations was that they did not limit their activities only to the EU Member States, and that in this way they were able to influence the third countries and change the way they operate. Some delegations expressed their support for such regional initiatives and the Presidency stressed that exchange of information paved the way to efficient law enforcement cooperation.

4. Council conclusions on new psychoactive substances

The Presidency presented a revised version of the above-mentioned Council conclusions, contained in doc. 16120/1/11 REV 1 CORDROGUE 71 SAN 215 and the delegations proposed further changes. The meeting was informed that a revised version of the document would be made available after the meeting which would be subject to endorsement by a silence procedure.

5. Council conclusions on cooperation between the EU and Eastern Europe in the field of drugs

The Presidency presented a revised version of the above-mentioned Council conclusions, contained in doc. doc. 16123/1/11 REV 1 CORDROGUE 72 COEST 382 ENFOCUSTOM 139 UD 314 JAIEX 116. After the incorporation of further changes proposed by the delegates, the document was endorsed by the meeting subject to a reservation from DE with a view of forwarding it to Coreper/Council.

6. 2011 Annual Report on the state of the drugs problem in Europe

A representative of the EMCDDA 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. He also explained that heroin and opioid use remained at the heart of the drug problem in Europe, that cannabis was still the most popular drug in Europe with an estimated 22.5 million annual users and that the local cannabis production in the EU represented a rising policy concern. He informed the meeting that for a number of years there was an overall decline in the MDMA content of ecstasy tablets, resulting from a shortage of the main precursor PMK. However, MDMA availability might be on the rebound which could lead to a renewed interest in this drug. The speaker also noted that in some important areas, such as cannabis use by young people, recent data showed positive changes, but that developments in the synthetic drugs market were worrying and polydrug use had become a serious issue.

7. Report from the National Drug Coordinators' Meeting

The Presidency reported on the above-mentioned meeting held on 21-22 November 2011 in Poznań, Poland and dedicated to discuss the future of the EU antidrug policy and the new EU antidrug strategy. Most Member States agreed on the need for a new strategy, but considered a possibility to have a more open strategy in terms of timing. It was also stated that the new strategy had to deal with an increasing number of drug users.

8. Expert dialogues on drugs – state of play and the way ahead

The Presidency presented a document on expert dialogues on drugs outlining the existing good practices in organising and conducting these meetings and also recommendations for the future (see doc. 16144/11 CORDROGUE 73 RELEX 1114 COLAT 37 AMLAT 94). The Presidency emphasised that this document was not binding and invited the Member States to follow the established good practices and to improve these meetings in the future.

9. Report on the dialogue on drugs with the Russian Federation

The Presidency gave an overview of the above-mentioned meeting which was held on 9 November 2011 in Brussels and the report of which is contained in doc. 17883/11 CORDORGUE 95.

10. Report on the dialogue on drugs with the US

The Presidency gave an overview of the above-mentioned meeting which was held on 8 November 2011 in Brussels (see doc. 17882/11 CORDROGUE 94 USA 87) mentioning that they found the US proposal to organise video conferences to discuss concrete topics interesting.

11. Preparation for the EU-LAC technical committee meeting

The Presidency presented the agenda of the above-mentioned meeting, contained in doc. CM 5678/11 and announced that the meeting would be held on 15 December 2011.

12. Introduction of the priorities of the incoming Danish Presidency

The DK delegation presented their Presidency programme and provisional calendar of the meetings. The speaker reminded that the COM decided that it should be the Member States drafting the new EU antidrug strategy and informed the delegates about their plans to start working on the development of the new strategy during their Presidency term. The delegates were also informed that the Polish Chair of expert dialogues on drugs would continue chairing expert dialogues on drugs with third countries during the DK Presidency.

13. AOB

- ***Summary of the Polish Presidency***

The Presidency gave an overview of the issues discussed, documents prepared and HDG and expert dialogue meetings with third countries held during the Polish Presidency.

- ***Preparation for the Paris Pact Ministerial Meeting***

The FR delegation reported on the organisation of the above-mentioned meeting to be held on 16 February 2012 in Vienna, informing the delegations that the meeting would be chaired by the Russian Federation with support of France. Austria would contribute to the budget of the meeting and would probably chair one of the roundtable discussions. The FR delegation encouraged the delegates to actively participate in the forthcoming meeting.

- ***Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing for the period 2014 to 2020 the Justice Programme, Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a Health for Growth Programme, the third multi-annual programme of EU action in the field of health for the period 2014-2020 – information by the Commission***

The representative of the COM informed the meeting that the proposals concerning the funding in the field of drugs for the next financial period had been launched explaining that the new Internal Security Fund would provide funding for drug trafficking and organised crime related projects and that drugs were not specifically mentioned in the Health and growth programme, but might be integrated into a broader subject. She also noted that it was yet to be seen where the topic of drugs could be introduced under the new research programme.

Some delegations expressed their disapproval of exclusion of drugs from the new Health and growth programme and noted that only the fight against drug supply would be covered during the next financial period while fight against drug demand was left out, therefore the balance between these two pillars of the EU antidrug policy was not sustained.

- *Praia action plan on drugs*

In reply to a question from one delegation if there was any clarification available about the use of the funds foreseen for the implementation of the Praia action plan, the representative of the COM informed the meeting that during the forthcoming meeting with ECOWAS they would pass again the message about the necessity to implement the action plan and to use the concerned funds only for the defined purposes.

- *European drug prevention quality standards conference*

A representative of the EMCDDA informed the delegations about the above-mentioned conference to be held on 8-9 December 2011 to discuss a new EMCDDA publication under the same title and to exchange views on which prevention quality standards should be applied and which would not be that efficient.
