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USA 20

## OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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| From:    | General Secretariat of the Council      |
| On:      | 21 May 2015                             |
| To:      | Delegations                             |
| Subject: | Outcomes of the EU-US dialogue on drugs |

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### 1. Adoption of the agenda

The meeting adopted the agenda as set out in doc. CM 2215/15.

### 2. Developments in the drugs situation and policies in the EU and in the US, including on new psychoactive substances

The representatives of the Commission, EMCDDA and Europol updated the US delegation on the latest trends in drug production, trafficking and consumption in the EU and the draft EU legislation aimed at tackling new psychoactive substances.

The US delegation mentioned that they should release the updated antidrug strategy in the forthcoming months and that the focus would be on demand reduction. The speaker also recalled that recent legislation increased access to treatment and reformed criminal justice system. The delegation was concerned about increased opium poppy cultivation in Mexico and increased coca bush cultivation in Colombia as well as about the sharp increase in methamphetamine and amphetamine seizures.

Marihuana was still the most widely consumed drug, and the delegation gave an overview of the implementation of marihuana regulation in the states which legalised it, noting that Colorado was most advanced in this regard and stressing that on federal level marihuana remained illegal. The speaker observed that the consequences of long term cannabis use were still unknown, and that the results of the first survey from Colorado demonstrated that the emergency rooms visits rose significantly in the first 6 months after marihuana was legalised.

As regards new psychoactive substances, the US delegation noted that the prevalence was not high, however, consequences of consumption were significant, and all states had taken measures to schedule the most dangerous new psychoactive substances, in addition to the federal legislation.

### **3. Thematic focus: the challenge of the misuse of and dependence on prescribed medicines and policy responses to it**

The US delegation gave an overview of the situation with misuse of and dependence on prescribed medicines and measures taken to address the problem, explaining that this caused a public health crisis in the US and therefore an action plan was adopted in 2011 to deal with misuse. The speaker noted that this problem was closely linked with heroin consumption, as there was a clear trend for people to switch from pain killers to heroin due to the lower price, therefore these two issues were tackled together.

The US delegation explained that among measures taken to address the situation were educating prescribers, expanding prescribed medicines monitoring systems and educating people to properly dispose medicines.

The representative of the EMCDDA gave an overview of the misuse situation in Europe, noting that there was a limited picture on the misuse of prescribed medicines at the European level and often at the national level, but the phenomenon of misuse appeared to be growing. The speaker observed that demand for heroin treatment seemed to be decreasing, while the demand for treatment as regards other opioids was growing and that such opiates as fentanyl and tramadol were misused especially in Northern and Eastern Europe. He also explained that in many cases benzodiazepines were misused by problem drug users.

#### **4. Exchange of views on UNGASS 2016**

The Presidency gave an overview of the EU priorities as regards UNGASS 2016 and noted that after having discussed the modalities of UNGASS, the focus should now be on the substance. The US delegation shared many of the EU priorities, especially as regards the three UN Drug Control Conventions being the cornerstone of the global response to the world drug problem. The US delegation also noted that UNGASS should produce a short practical document orientated towards providing actions for member states.

#### **5. Update on regional activities**

##### **– *Situation in West Africa***

The US delegation updated on the progress in implementing various projects developed under the WAPSI initiative, among the objectives of which was strengthening security operations, reinforcing justice operations, addressing socioeconomic causes of transnational crime. The speaker elaborated on their cooperation with the European partners and noted that they were looking for opportunities to expand the Network of West African Central Authorities and Prosecutors against Organized Crime (WACAP).

The representative of the Commission gave an overview of different initiatives under which the EU was engaging in West Africa, the major of which was the European Development Fund (EDF). The speaker explained that under this programme support was provided to ECOWAS for implementing its mandate, for helping states in the region to build their capacity, and also for supporting the rule of law and governance in the region. He informed the meeting that 11<sup>th</sup> EDF was under discussion and that the region would continue to be supported through it. The speaker also gave an overview of the Cocaine route programme and the results achieved so far as regards West Africa. The US delegation encouraged to reinforce the cooperation between the EU and US as regards this region.

– *Situation in Latin America, with a focus on Central America and the Caribbean*

The US delegation gave an overview of the initiatives addressing Central America, noting that apart from tackling the drug problem, much funding was channelled to increase the prosperity in the region. The speaker elaborated on cooperation with Colombia, which was now transferring the experience gained in tackling drug trafficking to train the officials of the Central American and Caribbean states. As regards Peru, the US was working to increase their capability to interdict cocaine flows through the southern border and a cooperation programme with Peru was under development. The speaker observed that the South-South cooperation was one of the best recent developments they had witnessed.

The Presidency gave an overview of the last High Level meeting of the EU-CELAC Cooperation and Coordination Mechanism on Drugs held on 11-12 February 2015 in Montevideo. The representative of the EEAS informed the US delegation that the second EU-Brazil dialogue on drugs was held on 18 March 2015 in Vienna and that preparations were taking place for the EU-CELAC summit to be organised on 10-11 June 2015, also noting that all these meetings gave opportunities for the convergence of positions. The representative of the Commission observed that the final evaluation of the COPOLAD programme was nearly finalised and gave an overview of the new COPOLAD programme.

– *Situation in Central Asia and Afghanistan*

The US delegation explained that they were collaborating with Afghan government on a drug use survey, which demonstrated the wide use of drugs in the country, and that in response a comprehensive programme against drugs should be developed by the Afghan government, which would also address drug demand reduction. The speaker also shared the concerns as regards the Paris Pact initiative and noted that further engagement in Afghanistan would be necessary.

The representatives of the EEAS and Commission gave an overview of the EU activities in Afghanistan, informing the meeting that they were finalising an agreement with Afghanistan as regards provision of development assistance over the next years.

The representative of the EEAS informed the meeting that the EU Strategy for Central Asia, which included tackling drugs as one of its priorities, was under review so as to address more specifically the needs of different Central Asian countries. She noted that drug consumption was also becoming a problem in the region and elaborated on the implementation of the EU-Central Asia Action Plan on Drugs 2014-2020. The representative of the Commission gave an overview of the implementation of different programmes covering the region, including CADAP, BOMCA and Heroin Route Programme. The US delegation reported on the progress achieved in implementing the Central Asia Antinarcotics Initiative.

## **6. Any other business**

No items were discussed under this agenda point.

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