



**Brussels, 27 October 2015  
(OR. en)**

**13321/15**

**CORDROGUE 81**

## **OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS**

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
On:	8 October 2015
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Outcomes of the EU-Russia expert meeting on drugs

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### **1. Adoption of the agenda**

The meeting adopted the agenda as set out in doc. CM 3835/15.

### **2. Developments in drug policy**

The representative of the Commission updated the meeting on the progress review of the implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020, work done as regards developing drug supply indicators and minimum quality standards in drug demand reduction, cooperation with civil society in drug policy formulation and implementation and other issues.

The Russian delegation noted that the drug phenomenon threatened the national security and informed the meeting that by order of the President a taskforce was created for combating drug trafficking at the borders. The speaker also explained that additional measures were put in place to prevent drug trafficking on the internet. He elaborated on international cooperation to tackle the drugs issue, including addressing this question at different fora.

### **3. Developments in drug situation**

The representative of the EMCDDA shared the major findings of the European Drug Report 2015, noting that overall the drug situation was complex and dynamic.

The Russian delegation explained that around 8 million people were estimated to use drugs in Russia, out of whom around 2 million were estimated to do so on a regular basis. The speaker also noted that the acceptance of drugs in the society was growing. He emphasised that synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances were a new threat and explained that for the first time their amount seized was nearly equal to that of opium, which historically was a major threat in Russia.

### **4. Reducing drug supply and tackling new psychoactive substances**

The Russian delegation explained that a special federal law was adopted introducing judicial liability for trafficking of new psychoactive substances and authorizing the inclusion of these substances into the schedule of narcotic drugs. The speaker also explained that as a result of measures taken to tackle the sale of new psychoactive substances on the internet, the sale of smoking plants decreased significantly. The delegation stressed the importance of tackling profits generated by drug trafficking and noted that they focused on the profits stemming from the Afghan drug business.

The representative of the Commission and the EMCDDA informed the meeting about the work done to develop drug supply indicators, which would provide a solid basis for action and would foster cooperation of law enforcement agencies. The representative of Europol gave an overview of the main findings of the 2015 SOCTA, noting that the main findings did not differ significantly from those of the previous SOCTA and that the drugs market remained the biggest criminal market, that drug routes kept on diverging and that cannabis was the biggest drug market within the EU. The speaker also noted that key developments were observed in the field of new psychoactive substances and synthetic drugs.

## 5. Successful policies to reduce drug demand

The representative of the Commission informed the Russian delegation about the adoption of EU minimum quality standards in prevention, risk and harm reduction, treatment, social integration and rehabilitation, noting that civil society had an important role to play in providing advice on the standards and their further implementation.

The representative of the EMCDDA noted that a wide range of policies were included in the field of demand reduction in the EU framework and gave an overview of the "Best practice portal". Speaking about prevention, he noted that some studies indicated that mass media prevention campaigns could be less effective than generally perceived, therefore the effective prevention had to take into account the control of impulses. The expert also explained that most patients in the EU were treated in outpatient settings and emphasised that drug treatment, particularly opioid substitution treatment, prevented overdoses and reduced the mortality risk of drug users. He also stressed that the number of overdoses could be further reduced in the EU by using such means as Naloxone.

The ES delegation shared their experience of tackling the issue of high heroin consumption in Spain, explaining that this was a major problem three decades ago. The delegation informed the meeting that harm reduction measures, such as introduction of opioid substitution treatment, also in prisons, needles and syringes exchange programmes, helped to significantly improve the situation.

The Russian delegation noted that the number of people registered with opioid addiction continued to decrease compared with previous years, however, in last year the number of cases of cannabis addiction, psychostimulants addiction and polydrug addiction grew significantly.

The delegation stressed that they were especially focusing on drug prevention among youth and presented different prevention measures taken in this respect, including an internet classroom against drugs “I have the right to know”, organised in 2014 in Russian schools in different regions, the third congress of youth antidrug movement at the end of which a resolution on improving drug situation was approved, and educational movement, promoting active life, sports and cultural life. The speaker also noted that they were working with mass media to spread the message of zero tolerance towards drugs. He also explained that around 500 NGOs were involved in rehabilitating drug users.

## **6. Afghanistan and Central Asia**

The Russian delegation emphasised the importance of addressing drug production and trafficking from Afghanistan and noted that there was a certain correlation between drug production in Afghanistan and terrorism financing. The speaker gave an overview of different initiatives taken to address this issue, including an intention together with UNODC to train personnel fighting against drugs in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region. He emphasised the significance of the Central Asian region in fighting against drug trafficking from Afghanistan and shared some concerns in this respect. The delegation also elaborated on the financial flows generated by Afghan drugs business and stressed the importance of tackling money laundering.

The representative of the EEAS gave an overview of the EU-Central Asia Action Plan on Drugs 2014-2020 and elaborated on various EU programmes, including the CADAP programme and Heroin route programme, aimed at addressing the issue of drug trafficking and consumption in the region.

## 7. UNGASS 2016

The Presidency gave an overview of the EU priorities on UNGASS 2016, calling for a more balanced approach, where drugs would be tackled not only as a law enforcement issue, but also as a health issue; noting that the existing UN Drug Conventions, which provided the international legal framework for addressing the drugs phenomenon, were sufficiently flexible to accommodate a wide range of national and regional drug policies, stressing the importance of an evidence-based approach, risk and harm reduction measures and abolition of death penalty, including for drug-related crimes.

The Russian delegation gave an overview of their priorities in preparation for UNGASS 2016, noting that the UN Drug Conventions were flexible enough and calling for preserving the current drug control system, while identifying the undiscovered potential of the current Conventions. The speaker emphasised the importance of eliminating the global production centers and creating conditions for social and economic development for the citizens of countries involved in drugs supply. He also noted that it was important to fight against new psychoactive substances, including through creating an effective mechanism for national and international control.

The Russian delegation also noted that UNGASS 2016 was one of the phases on the way to the 2019 full review of the implementation of the Political Declaration and the Action Plan and that the leading role in the preparation for UNGASS 2016 should be played by the CND. The speaker also called on the EU to coordinate the positions closer, including on the UNGASS outcome document.

## 8. Any other business

### - *International cooperation in the framework of the Paris Pact initiative*

The Russian delegation updated the meeting on the state of play with the Paris Pact initiative and shared ideas on the possible improvements.