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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
On:	3 and 4 November 2015
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Outcomes of the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs

1. Adoption of the agenda

The meeting adopted the agenda outlined in doc. CM 4296/1/15 REV 1 with the addition of the following AOB points:

- Involvement of WHO in preparation for UNGASS 2016 - information by the SE delegation
- Information from the BG delegation on new psychoactive substance: 2-bromo-4-methylpropiophenone

2. Preparation for UNGASS 2016

The Chair of the UNGASS Board presented the process of the preparation for UNGASS 2016. He noted that organizational arrangements of the UNGASS 2016 were to be defined during the reconvened 58th CND session in December 2015 and that the roundtable discussions at UNGASS 2016 could possibly be organised following a good example of holding interactive discussions at the 58th CND session.

The speaker also outlined the process of elaboration of the UNGASS outcome document, explaining that the text of the UNGASS outcome document should be available in December 2015 and negotiations should start in January 2016, while the CND would be expected to approve the outcome document at the 59th CND session in March 2016. He also updated delegations on the recent developments as regards drafting of the revised paper containing elements for the UNGASS outcome document. The Chair of the UNGASS Board stressed the importance of sharing experiences and best practices and of outlining operational recommendations in the UNGASS outcome document. The speaker also encouraged delegations to organise different meetings on various drug-related topics in the run-up to UNGASS 2016.

Delegations discussed the preparation, outlining the importance of the civil society involvement in preparation for and at UNGASS 2016 itself. They stressed the necessity for the UNGASS outcome document to put more emphasis on respecting human rights while formulating and implementing drugs policies. Some delegations also noted that first agreement on the outcome document and its main elements had to be reached first before starting an in-depth discussion on operational recommendations contained in the document.

The Presidency reported on the outcome of the 6th CND intersession meeting held on 15 October 2015 in Vienna and delegations prepared for the forthcoming 7th CND intersessional meeting to be held on 12 November 2015.

Delegations further discussed the EU common position on UNGASS (doc. DS 1369/3/15 REV 3) which would be used as a written annex to the EU statement for the reconvened CND session in December 2015 and as a basis for the EU oral statement on this occasion. A revised version of the document was prepared during the meeting to be endorsed by silence procedure.

The Presidency informed delegations that an EU side event to present the EU position on UNGASS 2016 would be held on 9 December 2015 in Vienna, in the margins of the reconvened 58th CND session.

The Presidency also updated delegations as regards the intention to organise an informal EU - CELAC meeting on UNGASS on 10 December 2015 in Vienna and invited delegations to make suggestions on the content of this meeting.

The PT delegation informed delegations about their side event to be organised on 9 December 2015 in Vienna, which should contribute to a better comprehension on the possibilities to implement wide ranging policies within the UN Drug conventions by presenting the examples of Portuguese drugs policies.

3. Preparation for 59th CND session: Discussion on the draft CND resolution on proportionality for sentences regarding drug-related offences

Delegations further examined the revised version of the above-mentioned draft resolution and the deadline of 10 November 2015 was set for providing written comments on it.

The Presidency also invited other delegations intending to present draft resolutions for the 59th CND session to inform the Presidency.

4. Dialogue on research

The representative of the Commission stressed the importance of research in drugs policy and emphasised the need to guarantee synergies. The speaker gave an overview of the EU financial instruments funding different aspects of drugs policy, including the Justice programme, Internal Security Fund - Police, Health programme and Horizon 2020 programme. She explained that the Justice programme was a formal successor of the Drug Prevention and Information Programme (2007-2013) and funded drug demand and drug supply related initiatives, including research. The speaker also presented the calls for proposals issued under different programmes for 2015.

The representative of the EMCDDA noted that progress had been made in drug-related research in Europe, especially as regards the Lisbon Addictions 2015 conference, the future editions of which should be supported as the major European scientific event in the field of addiction, and the First European Strategic Research Agenda, drafted by the FP7-funded project ERANID, which was the most comprehensive illicit drug research agenda exercise undertaken up to date. He stressed that a coordination mechanism was still required to promote synergies in research. The speaker also presented a list of research priorities drafted by the EMCDDA Scientific Committee in the areas of population-based research and epidemiology; demand reduction; drug policy; basic biological, neurobiological, behavioural research; supply, crime and supply reduction as well as new psychoactive substances.

The leaders of Alice Rap project aimed at studying the place of addictions in contemporary European society elaborated on three messages for redesigning governance of addictions. They concluded that such concepts and terms as "addiction" and "dependence" should be replaced by "heavy use" and that smart policies should account for co-benefits and adverse side effects in an inclusive well-being frame, and engage stakeholders in the policy cycle through accountability for health and well-being. The speaker also informed the meeting that the results of their research would be published into a book in 2016.

The representative of the ERANID elaborated on the first joint call "Understanding Drug use Pathways" with a budget of around 5 million euro. The speaker explained that it emphasised the link between knowledge generated and its demonstrable contribution to the development of evidence-based treatment, evidence-based interventions and evidence-based policy making. He also introduced the criteria for eligibility, including the participation of at least two (but preferably three) different countries and informed the meeting that the second call for proposals would be launched in May 2016.

The representative of the European Drug Emergencies Network (Euro-DEN) noted that there was limited systematic data collated on acute drug and new psychoactive substances toxicity and presented the work conducted to develop the minimum dataset as well as the results of the data collection in 16 sentinel centres in the EU between October 2013 and September 2014. He also informed the meeting that guidelines had been prepared for managing acute toxicity, available on the EMCDDA best practice portal, and that a number of trainings had been conducted, which resulted in improved confidence in managing recreational drug and new psychoactive substances toxicity.

5. Misuse of and dependence on prescribed medicines: informal expert group

The Presidency proposed to the delegations to establish an informal, interdisciplinary expert group on misuse of and dependence on prescribed medicines, which would provide expert opinions on the definition of the above-mentioned phenomenon and indicators to monitor it for the consideration of the HDG and which would function as an online consultation expert group. Delegations were asked to propose experts for this group by 20 November 2015.

6. Preparation for the EU-US expert meeting on drugs

The Presidency presented the agenda of the above-mentioned meeting to be held on 2 December 2015 (doc. WK 117/15) as a videoconference.

7. Preparation for the Dublin Group meeting

The FR delegation presented the agenda of the above-mentioned meeting to be held on 3 December 2015 (doc. CM 4465/15).

8. Report on the EU-Russia expert meeting on drugs

The Presidency reported on the above-mentioned meeting held on 8 October 2015, the outcomes of which is outlined in doc. 13321/15 CORDROGUE 81.

9. Discussion on the draft legislation on new psychoactive substances

Delegations further examined the draft legislation on new psychoactive substances, based on the Presidency's text prepared under the legal basis of Article 83(1) TFEU, especially as regards the status of new psychoactive substances and their similarities with the conventional drugs, strengthening of the information exchange system and the added value of introducing a temporary ban to tackle the most dangerous new psychoactive substances at the EU level. The Presidency informed the meeting about the intention to submit the articles containing criminal law provisions for the examination at the DROIPEN working party on 18 November 2015 and to further address the rest of the articles at the HDG.

10. AOB

– Involvement of WHO in preparation for UNGASS 2016 - information by the SE delegation

The SE delegation informed the meeting about the involvement of WHO in preparation for UNGASS 2016, also noting that an agenda point on "Public health dimension of the World Drug Problem including in the context of UNGASS" was foreseen for the 38th Session of the WHO Executive Board Meeting.

– Information from the BG delegation on new psychoactive substance: 2-bromo-4-methylpropiofenone

The BG delegation informed the meeting about the above-mentioned new psychoactive substance detected in Bulgaria, which was suspected to be used in the manufacture of synthetic drugs, in particular mephedrone.
