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**NOTE**

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From: The Presidency of the Dublin Group  
To: Dublin Group

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Subject: Guidelines for Cooperation in the Dublin Group

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Delegations will find in Annex the final revised Guidelines for cooperation in the Dublin Group prepared by the Dublin Group Presidency taking into account delegations' comments received.

GUIDELINES FOR COOPERATION IN THE DUBLIN GROUP

1. The Dublin Group is a flexible, informal consultation and coordination mechanism for global, regional and country-specific problems of illicit drugs production, trafficking and demand. It is based on consensus and mutual assistance. Its participants cooperate closely on international, regional and bilateral drugs policy, taking into account in particular the UN Conventions on narcotic drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol and of 1971 and 1988 and the 2016 UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem outcome document, as reference documents and the most recent international consensus on this issue, and the work being done on the basis of these instruments by other groups or organisations.
2. Its members are the Member States of the European Union, Australia, Canada, Japan, Norway, the United States, the European Commission, the European External Action Service, and the UNODC.
3. Where appropriate, Dublin Group fora should cooperate, including by invitation to relevant meetings, with international and regional organisations such as World Bank, WHO, WCO, Interpol, ILO, UNESCO, CICAD, Pompidou Group, EU delegations, and relevant EU Agencies (e.g. EMCDDA and EUROPOL) to enhance synergies in their respective work and to avoid overlap.
4. The Dublin Group operates on three levels: the central level, the regional level and the local level.
  - a) *At the central level*, participants attend meetings which deal first and foremost with matters of fundamental significance that require joint discussion and coordination, including recommendations from regional chairs and Mini Dublin Groups. Conclusions and, where appropriate, guidance are transmitted to Mini Dublin Groups via regional chairs. Thematic debates are also held at the central level. Discussion topics should build on those identified by the mini and regional Dublin Group meetings as topical and input for topics should be solicited in the months leading up to the following central meeting.

*b) At regional level*, the chairs assess the situation in the region, and where appropriate, formulate orientations and suggest initiatives to be taken.

*c) At local level*, the Mini Dublin Groups compile local situation reports that are sent to the regional chair, facilitate coordination of drug policy and assistance by donor countries, open dialogue with the host country on drug control, draw up recommendations and, where appropriate, implement orientations from the Central Dublin Group and regional chairs. The Mini Dublin Groups work together with the drug liaison officers and where necessary with other competent experts (e.g. EU Delegations and/or relevant Liaisons Officer, EUROPOL/EU Security expert at local/regional levels, UNODC, the World Bank, UNDP).

## **5. Central Dublin Group**

- The Central Dublin Group meets twice a year. The Presidency will endeavour to organise the autumn meeting in the same week as the UNODC major donors' group meeting or on the margin of other international meetings.
- The Central Dublin Group chair rotates after four years, is renewable once, and should alternate among EU Members States and the other members of the group.
- The agenda is drawn up by the chair in the light of reports and recommendations from the regional chairs and other participants of the group. An initial discussion of the agenda including the topic(s) of the thematic debate should take place at the closure of the previous meeting.
- Not later than one month after the meeting of the Central Dublin Group, the chair circulates a concise document containing agreed recommendations and main conclusions.
- The Central Dublin Group, through the regional chairs, will inform the relevant Mini Dublin Groups that it has endorsed their recommendations and will instruct the relevant Mini Dublin Groups to encourage their host authorities to implement the agreed recommendations, as appropriate.

- The chair of the Central Dublin Group maintains appropriate contacts with the chair of the major donor group of UNODC. The respective chairs should attend, where possible, each other's meetings.
- The Central Dublin Group should identify countries and/or subregions and themes to streamline the activity and the reporting of the Mini Dublin Groups of the regional chairs.
- The chair ensures that regional reports and agenda are sent out to the members at least one month before the Central Dublin Group meeting.
- The chair of the Central Dublin Group shall draw up an annual report based on the annual regional reports. The reference period for the annual report is from 1 January to 31 December of the two years before publication. The annual report will be issued at the first biannual meeting.

## **6. Regional Dublin Groups and regional chairs**

- The Dublin Group is subdivided into regional groups, as shown in Annex 1. This annex is reviewed regularly. The central group decides on the creation of other regional and subregional groups.
- A member can only chair one regional or subregional group.
- The regional chair plays an important role in the operational structure of the Dublin Group. It has the following responsibilities:
  - = establishment of Mini Dublin Groups under the guidance of the Central Dublin Group;
  - = coordinating the work of the Mini Dublin Groups and monitoring sub-regional cooperation;
  - = observation and analysis of the region and drawing up recommendations for Central Dublin Group consideration, where appropriate;

- = drawing up annual regional reports in accordance with Annex 2 and preparing recommendations for the Central Dublin Group on the basis of information from the Mini Dublin Groups. The regional report covers the period of time from 1 January to 31 December of the previous year and is sent to the Secretariat at least five weeks before the first bi-annual meeting of the Central Dublin Group. Subsequently the Secretariat will draw up a single note in which all proposed recommendations and conclusions are summarized. When possible and appropriate, reports should focus on specific issues, including regional assessments. State of implementation of recommendations should be part of the report of regional chairs to the subsequent meeting of the Central Dublin Group;
  - = suggesting agenda items for the meeting of the Central Dublin Group;
  - = informing the Mini Dublin Groups on the results of proceedings in the Central Dublin Group and organising the implementation of measures at local level;
  - = convening conferences of the regional Dublin Group as necessary.
- The regional chair changes every two years, with a one term renewable extension.

## **7. Mini-Dublin Groups**

- The Mini Dublin Groups should, as appropriate, monitor all aspects of the drug control situation in the host country, including the legal situation and the organisation and facilities of the drugs authorities, particularly in relation to national strategies, where these are in place. This also includes the assessment of the political will of the host country to conduct a comprehensive and resolute anti-drugs policy.
- The regional chairs review regularly the activities of Mini Dublin Groups.
- In close cooperation with the UNODC field offices (if UNODC is present in the country), the Mini Dublin Groups maintain a current inventory of existing and planned drugs activities in order to enable identification of host-country needs (if any) and to avoid duplication.

- The Mini Dublin Groups conduct a dialogue with the host country, develop initiatives and pass on any proposals from the host country. When appropriate, officials of the host country can be invited to meetings of Mini Dublin Groups, and the regional chair should decide upon their level of representation.
- The chair is held by the Head of Mission of the country holding the regional chairmanship. The Mini Dublin Groups hold regular meetings, at least twice a year. The meetings are prepared in cooperation with the UNODC field office if it exists. The chair draws up the minutes and informs the Dublin Group members not represented at the meeting. In case the regional chair is not represented and in other exceptional cases, an ad hoc solution has to be found based on the principle of mutual assistance.
- The Mini Dublin Groups compile annual country reports in accordance with Annex 3. The report covers the period of time from 1 January to 31 December of the year before publication.
- The participants brief their authorities on the proceedings of the Mini Dublin Groups, in particular on proposed measures, and seek the necessary instructions, if needed.
- In case of difficult and fundamental questions, the regional chair informs the Central Dublin Group, which discusses the matter and, where appropriate, issues recommendations.

### **How to join the Dublin Group?**

8. Applications to join the Dublin Group as a new member or as observer are subject to certain criteria. Both positions will be examined on a case-by-case basis. The decision is taken by consensus at Central level.

#### 8.1 Criteria:

Criteria for new member and observer should be the following ones: net donors of international drug assistance, demonstrate commitment to meaningfully contribute to international efforts to address the world drug problem in all its aspects, share the principles guiding the cooperation in the Dublin Group and respect human rights and the rule of law in pursuing international efforts on the world drug problem.

## 8.2 Member:

In order to become a member of the Dublin Group, the State sends a letter to the Central Group through its Regional Chair. The decision will be approved by consensus by the Central Dublin Group.

The new members of the Dublin Group should agree to abide by the decisions already made by the Dublin Group.

## 8.3 Observer:

To become an observer of the Dublin Group, the State sends a letter to the Central Group through its Regional Chair. The decision will be approved by consensus by the Central Dublin Group.

Observers can contribute to consultations within the Dublin Group by supporting recommendations and contribute, if they deem necessary, to the compilation of data for the formal reports. The contribution of the observers is without prejudice to the analysis and the conclusions of the reports submitted by the Mini and Regional Groups to the Central level.

Observers cannot chair a Regional or a Mini Dublin Group.

## 8.4 If those criteria cease to be applied:

The Central Dublin Group can, by consensus and at any time, end the membership or the observer status of a State. The effective date of the termination of the membership or the observer status of a State is the date of the official letter sent by the Central Group.

If a State intends to cease by its own decision its membership or observer status with the Dublin Group, the State shall provide a notice of its intention to the Central Dublin Group through its Regional Chair. In this case, the formal approval of the Dublin Group is not necessary.

9. Secretariat

- The Secretariat ensures that the regional reports, which have the status of working documents, are sent before the meeting of the Central Dublin Group and arranges for the agenda to be sent out at least one month before the meeting.
- The Secretariat drafts the report of the meeting after each Central Dublin Group meeting and disseminates it to the Dublin Group members.

10. These guidelines will be applied as from the 1 March 2018.

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**Regions in the Dublin Group**

- Africa
  - Subregions: Northern Africa
  - Western Africa
  - East Africa
  - Southern Africa
  - South East Africa - Mozambique
- Western Balkans
- Near East [including Turkey and Iraq]
- Iran
- Caribbean [including Surinam, Guyana, Belize]
- Central America/Mexico
- Eastern Europe and Caucasus
- Central Asia
- South America
- South East Asia
- South West Asia

Format for Reports from the Regional Dublin Groups

1. Progress of work in the Mini Dublin Groups
  - overview of the regional situation regarding illicit narcotics production
  - presentation of the national situation regarding illicit narcotics production, consumption and trafficking in narcotics and psychotropic substances, money-laundering and precursor control
  - summarizing the work of the Mini Dublin Groups in the region
  - essential points to be followed up by the Mini Dublin Groups
2. Regional or sub-regional nature of problems
3. Matters requiring treatment by the Dublin Group at the central level
4. Place and date of meetings of Mini Dublin Groups
5. Regional group recommendations/conclusions with respect to:
  - 5.1. Political initiatives
  - 5.2. Donor community priorities in light of points 2 and 3 above
6. Report on the implementation of recommendations/conclusions endorsed a year before.

**Format for Country Reports from the Mini-Dublin Groups**

(to be drawn up in cooperation with the UNODC  
when a UNODC field Office exists in the country)

1. General situation in the country  
  
Drugs situation in the host country including production, trafficking and demand related issues
2. Short update on the country's drugs strategy  
  
To include
  - 2.1. changes/additions to the drug-related institutional framework
  - 2.2. legal/legislative changes, including money laundering and chemical precursors
  - 2.3. an assessment of the government's political will to conduct a comprehensive and resolute anti-drugs policy
3. Enumeration of major bilateral and multilateral cooperation drugs programmes (period, main activities and results - including those supporting demand reduction)
4. Place and date of meetings of Mini Dublin Groups
5. Prioritized identification of needs for external assistance
6. Mini-Dublin Group assessment of needs
  - 6.1. emerging threats/trends
  - 6.2. political initiatives
  - 6.3. recommendations