



**Brussels, 11 October 2018
(OR. en)**

12954/18

**CORDROGUE 78
SAN 312
JAI 979**

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 19 September 2018
To: Delegations

Subject: EU-Russia expert meeting on drugs

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in **CM 4050/18**.

2. Developments in drug situation and policy

The representative of the Commission presented the recent developments in the drug situation, referring in particular to the new legislation package on New Psychoactive Substances that will enter into force in November 2018, the Council Conclusions adopted in March 2018 on alternative to coercive sanctions, as well as the ongoing evaluation of the EMCDDA.

The representative of the EMCDDA gave an overview of the current drug situation in Europe, which was going through a particularly dynamic phase where old phenomena coexisted with new challenges. He elaborated further on the EU Early Warning System for New Psychoactive Substances.

The representative of EUROPOL presented the results of the agency's activities on drugs over the last months and announced the conference which will be held by the end of 2018 to review actions and get guidance for future work.

The Russian delegation expressed concern at the findings of the 2018 World Drug Report, and underlined that the international community should step up efforts to respond to new challenges. The legalisation of cannabis in some countries was also worrisome and the international conventions should be respected.

The Russian delegation presented some of the main trends in the drug phenomenon in the Russian Federation, noting that new challenges and threats were rising. The share of synthetic drugs on the Russian market was gradually increasing. The wide use of new technologies by drug traffickers was confirmed, including the Darknet and cryptocurrencies, and postal delivery.

2017 legislative initiatives in Russia included administrative supervision of persons committing minor drug related offences several times, prohibition of the use of programs such as VPN and TOR, regulation of messenger services and identification of users, incentives to drug users to cease drug consumption and consult health services, treatment and rehabilitation instead of imprisonment of drug users who committed crimes, and the extension of the National Controlled Substances List.

3. Successful policies to reduce drug demand

The representative of EMCDDA presented the EU approach to drug demand reduction, including the introduction of harm reduction measures since the late 1990's such as Needle and Syringe Programs (NSPs) and Opioid Substitution Treatment (OST), measures which were scaled up during the first decade of 2000. Evidence showed the effectiveness of NSPs in reducing the transmission of HIV, a reduced mortality among clients in treatment, especially those under OST, and lower levels of HIV incidence among people who inject drugs and were under OST. The speaker also presented the 2017 implementation of the take-home naloxone programs in Europe (THN).

The delegate from Austria presented the example of drug demand reduction measures in Vienna: OST and harm reduction measures.

The Russian delegation presented the approach to drug demand reduction in the Russian Federation, starting from the 2010 Strategy of the State Anti-Drug Policy of the Russian Federation until 2020, that included measures such as a State system for prevention of non-medical use of psychoactive substances, and medical and social rehabilitation for patients with an addiction syndrome. The strategy was changed in 2018 to take account of new realities. One of the directions pursued was the development of personalised prevention and treatment.

4. Reducing drug supply, including through alternative development and on Darknet, and tackling new psychoactive substances

The EMCDDA representative provided information on the main categories of NPS notified to the EU Early Warning System, on the legal responses (including the new EU legislation) and statistics on seizures showing an overall rise in number of seizures and quantities seized between 2005 and 2015. The increasing use of online sales was also a growing challenge to the existing drug control models, as shown by the EMCDDA-EUROPOL report on drugs and the Darknet.

The Russian delegation echoed the concerns of the EU regarding the use of new technologies in the drug market, not only of the Darknet for drug trafficking, but also the use of the electronic payment systems. The speaker stressed the need to collect more relevant data in this regard.

The Commission representative underlined the efforts of the EU to address the challenges related to reduction of drug supplies, including on alternative development. The EU was currently running some cooperation programs with Peru, Bolivia and Colombia at bilateral level and with COPOLAD at regional level in Latin America and in the Caribbean, and was working on Council Conclusions on Alternative development.

5. Exchange of views on the implementation of the UNGASS outcome document and the 2019 global drug policy review

The Russian delegation underlined the complementarity and mutually reinforcing nature of the 2009 Political declaration and Plan of Action, the 2014 Joint Ministerial Statement and the 2016 UNGASS Outcome Document. They considered the UNGASS Outcome Document to be "operational arms" of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action, and expressed the view that the targets and goals of the Political Declaration reflected the determination to promote a society free of drug abuse. The Russian delegation considered that the implementation of all documents should be followed up in an integrated manner and that particular attention should be put to the operative paragraph 36 of the Political Declaration. There was no need to negotiate a new policy document in March 2019 and the outcome of the ministerial segment should be a concise and meaningful document reaffirming existing commitments and setting a new target date for the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action.

The Commission representative agreed that the outcome should be a short and meaningful document that outlined the current state and the way ahead. The speaker also underlined that, while efforts on supply reduction should by all means continue, equal efforts should be made towards prevention and demand reduction.

The Presidency concluded that this exchange of views was useful in the work towards the 2019 Ministerial Segment of the 62nd CND session and that discussions would continue in Vienna in the coming months.