



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 9 July 2019
(OR. en)

11130/19

CORDROGUE 39
SAN 344

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

Subject: EU Statement on the occasion of the Intersessional meeting of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Vienna 24 June 2019
- Preparations for consideration by the Commission of the proposed scheduling recommendations by the World Health Organization on cannabis and cannabis-related recommendations

Delegations will find in annex the final version of the European Union Statement on *Preparations for consideration by the Commission of the proposed scheduling recommendations by the World Health Organization on cannabis and cannabis-related recommendations* which was expressed, on behalf of the EU, at the Intersessional session of the CND in Vienna.



European Union Statement
on the occasion of the
Intersessional meeting of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs
Vienna, 24 June 2019

Item: *Preparations for consideration by the Commission of the proposed scheduling recommendations by the World Health Organization on cannabis and cannabis-related recommendations*

It is an honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. The European Union and its Member States would like to thank you, Mr. Chair, and to thank the World Health Organisation for the opportunity of today's exchange on the WHO's proposed scheduling recommendations on cannabis and cannabis-related substances. A full understanding by all Member States, of the precise scope and content of the recommendations, is the only way to enable a future vote by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, based on facts and evidence.

Mr. Chair, please allow us to make a few important remarks in the framework of today's discussion.

2. First of all, the EU and its Member States would like to reiterate their commitment to the effective implementation of the UN Drug Conventions. We welcome the broad consensus of the international community that the Conventions and the relevant international human rights instruments are the cornerstone of the international drug control system. At the same time, we strongly support the important role played by the WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence in the international drug control system. We also acknowledge that the recommendations of the ECDD are based on the available scientific, medical and public health evidence and comply with the criteria established in the conventions.

Moreover, building on experience, the European Union and its Member States would like to emphasise that drug policies based upon an integrated, balanced and – importantly – on an evidence-based approach, including the risks for users or patients, prove to be the most effective way to address the world drug situation.

3. The European Union's drug policy is based on such an approach. It is therefore of utmost importance for the EU to properly evaluate the impact of the recommendations put forward by the World Health Organisation on scheduling of substances, ahead of the decisions to be taken by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. The short time that had elapsed between the presentation on 24 January of this year of the scheduling recommendations, and the 62nd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in March, had not allowed for a proper assessment.
4. Therefore, we welcome the opportunity to put forward questions to the World Health Organisation on these recommendations. The EU and its Member States have specific questions, that we have submitted in writing to the UNODC ahead of our meeting today.
5. On a more procedural level, it is key for us all to understand what the follow-up of today's meeting will be. In particular, may we ask the World Health Organisation what their intention is as regards the recommendations: in particular, will the recommendations' wording be further specified and/or completed with additional information following the requested clarifications, in order to facilitate the process towards a future vote?

In this regard, the EU and its Member States believe that the future vote should take place once the impact of the cannabis and cannabis-related substances re-scheduling recommendations has been assessed.

6. Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The European Union and its Member States are looking forward to receiving additional information on these aspects, and regarding the questions that we have submitted in writing. We have no doubt that the discussions today and in the weeks and months to come, will help to provide clarity on the consequences of the WHO recommendations, before a future vote is held in the CND.

Thank you!
