

Drugs and Drug Addiction Programme of the French Presidency of the Council of the EU

The priorities of the French Presidency

1) The French Presidency of the EU anticipates foregrounding four thematic priorities (immigration, energy, environment, defence) and four cross-winds (the growth of Europe, the protection of citizens, the future of Europe, and Europe on the international stage).

Under the banner of the protection of citizens, the fight against drugs and drug addiction is a constant aim that is constantly in the news and, it is acknowledged, continues to await control of an operational and concrete nature.

Under the banner of Europe on the international stage, the Presidency aims to coordinate national positions on matters relating to drugs, so that Europe can express herself in one voice on the international stage.

2) Throughout the second half of 2008, the Presidency will have notably:

- worked to facilitate the negotiation of a new EU action plan against drugs for the 2009 – 2012 period.
- Pinned down preparation for EU positions at the high level meeting of the United Nations in Vienna in March 2009 where the main strategy guidelines against drugs and drug addiction should be adopted for the years to come.

These two goals represent a unique opportunity to reinforce and deepen cooperation at the heart of the EU with countries in the third world through communal action against drugs and drug addiction.

3) These foundation objectives ought to be maintained at the same time as researching how to be more effective (i.e. obtaining a real and measurable impact on the drug situation in our countries) and how to improve communication about our goals so that they are known and understood by our citizens.

4) In sharing these policy guidelines, we expect to attain the following political objectives:

- enhance the stature and political authority of the EU Council's Horizontal Drugs Group, in accordance with the defined guidelines in the EU strategy against drugs (2005-20012)
- bring work on a new EU action plan for the 2009-20012 period to completion which guarantees a real impact on the drug situation in our countries
- be in a position to defend a clear, communal EU position at the UN in March 2009 which brings value for Europe and the international community.

5) In order to succeed, the Presidency proposes to research the following potential developments of HDG and the action plan:

- producing a shared analysis of the menace (both interior and exterior)
- bringing mutualisation of national means to a European level, convergence of modes of action and the sharing of knowledge, especially scientific, in the key areas of prevention and tackling public health, research, and the fight against the trafficking of drugs within the EU and in the third world.
- Simplifying and concentrating the future action plan
- Re-enforcing the judicial dimension in the cooperation on drug control between Member States and the Third World
- Re-enforcing systems in relation to: Identification; confiscation; sharing information on known criminals, this objective is not uniquely linked to the HDG
- Reflecting on the position and functioning of the HDG so that it can better take alcohol into account; its massive abuse and its link with illicit drugs.
- Transmitting public opinion more effectively
- Studying modes of diffusion of primary prevention messages towards young people, especially using new media.

6) With regards to external relations, these policy guidelines should drive us to maintain, replace, or introduce EU dialogues

- with our traditional partners: Latin America; the Caribbean; Russia; and the United States
- with recently rediscovered partners: ECOWAS; Mauritania; Central Asia; and others
- with new partners: Morocco

With the assistance of these partners, the Commission, The Secretary General of the Council and concerned EU agencies (OEDT, Europol, Eurojust) and with our multilateral partners (UNODC, Council of Europe, Groupe Pompidou, WHO), the French Presidency intends to reinforce the urgency and political visibility of the drug problem in Europe and to improve the efficiency of communal action.

The Drugs and Drug Addiction Calender of the French Presidency of the Council of the EU

July

2nd 3rd 4th: Management Council, OEDT Lisbon

14th: HDG, Brussels

15th: Technical Committee on the EU, Latin America, Troika, ECOWAS, Mauritania, Brussels

August

Nothing

September

24th, 25th, 26th: Colloquium “The Fight Against Opiates in the Mediterranean” -

29th & 30th: HDG, Brussels (Action Plan: 2 days)

October

1st: Troika Central Asia, Russia, Brussels

13th & 14th: HDG, Brussels (Action Plan: 2 days)

22nd: Drugs Coordination, Paris

November

5th & 6th: Information Sharing Working Group, CIFAD Fort de France, Martinique

Opening of the CND / UN Session in Vienna (date to be confirmed)

13th: HDG, Brussels

14th: Troika USA, Morocco, Brussels

21st: Colloquium “Drug Money, the Black Market, Confiscation, and Known Criminals in Europe” Paris

25th & 26th: Group Pompidou, Varsovie

December

3rd, 4th, 5th Management Council, OEDT Lisbon

9th & 10th: Colloquium “How to Better Treat Drug Addiction? New Scientific and Clinical Pathways for Europe”

11th, 12th, & 13th: Colloquium “Drugs and Culture” OFDT / Sciences Po, Paris

15th: Dublin Group, Brussels

16th: HDG, Brussels

17th: Technical Committee of the EU / ALC, EU meeting with the Andean Community (to be confirmed) Brussels,

This document has been prepared by IDPC and is not an official translation.

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