COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 5 February 2007

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LIMITE

SAN 15

"I/A" ITEM NOTE
from : Working Party on Public Health
to : Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)/Council
No. prev. doc. : 5283/07 SAN 5
Subject : Communication from the Commission to the Council on the transitional prolongation and extension of the mandate of the Health Security Committee in view of a future general revision of the structures dealing with health threats at EU level
- Adoption of Council conclusions

1. On 16 November 2006, the Commission submitted the above-mentioned Communication.

2. On 5 February 2007 and following a number of meetings, the Working Party on Public Health agreed on the draft Council conclusions as set out in the Annex.

3. Subject to confirmation by the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1), the Council is invited to agree on the draft Council conclusions at its meeting on 22 February 2007.
DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE HEALTH SECURITY COMMITTEE¹

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:

1. RECOGNISES that while health security and pandemic preparedness planning remain primarily a Member State competence, and that policy decisions on preparedness and planning are for Member States, it is necessary to enhance the coordination of national measures and to improve information-sharing and communication at European level.

2. NOTES the importance of ensuring an effective response and a high level of operational preparedness with regard to chemical, biological and radio-nuclear (CBRN) threats and pandemic outbreaks.

3. RECALLS Decision No 2119/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council setting up a network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the Community².

4. RECALLS the Council Conclusions of 2 June 2004 on Community Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Planning³.

5. NOTES the Commission’s Communication on transitional prolongation and extension of the mandate of the Health Security Committee in view of a future general revision of the structures dealing with health threats at EU level⁴.

¹ DK Parliamentary reserve.
³ 9507/04 (Presse 163).
⁴ 15561/06 SAN 244.
6. RECALLS that the Health Security Committee was established as an informal cooperation and coordination body by the Health Ministers and the European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection in 2001 and that its terms of reference are to:

- exchange information on health-related threats from acts of terrorism or any deliberate release of biological or other agents with intent to harm health;

- share information and experience on preparedness and response plans and crisis management strategies;

- be able to communicate rapidly in case of health-related crises;

- advise Health Ministers and the European Commission services on preparedness and response as well as on coordination of emergency planning at EU level;

- share and coordinate health-related crisis responses by Member States and the Commission;

- facilitate and support coordination and cooperation efforts and initiatives undertaken at EU and international level and help and contribute to their implementation at national level.

7. AGREES TO:

- the Commission and Health Ministers prolonging temporarily the mandate of the Health Security Committee under the above-mentioned terms of reference, covering also pandemic influenza and generic preparedness and response planning;
- review the Health Security Committee's mandate within the general revision of the structures dealing with health threats at EU level, in any case at the latest within two years after the submission of the report on the achievements of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) to the European Parliament and the Council, as envisaged in Article 31 of Regulation (EC) No 851/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004.\(^5\)

8. CALLS ON THE MEMBER STATES TO:

- provide active support to the work of the Health Security Committee;

- ensure the appropriate follow-up at a national level to the issues raised at the Health Security Committee.

9. CALLS ON THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION TO:

- keep each other informed of developments, in particular ensure rapid information in a health-related crisis;

- continue to cooperate with the relevant international and inter-governmental organisations, in particular the World Health Organisation;

- facilitate technical assistance at an operational and multisectoral strategic level;

- work towards coordination and interoperability of their preparedness and response planning and their implementation of the International Health Regulations;

- facilitate regular meetings of the Health Security Committee at a high level and with adequate security clearance in accordance with Council Decision 2001/264/EC of 19 March 2001 adopting the Council's security regulations\(^6\), on the basis of rules of procedure agreed by the Health Security Committee; and

- prepare for and participate in Joint Evaluation Exercises.

10. CALLS ON THE COMMISSION TO:

- ensure that the Council is fully and regularly informed of, and consulted on, the ongoing work of the Health Security Committee;

- keep the role of the Network established under Decision No 2119/98/EC under review and assess in particular the roles of the European Medicines Agency and the ECDC in this area;

- come forward as appropriate with a proposal for a long-term solution for the Community framework for health security taking into account the structures in all relevant sectors to ensure that work is taken forward in the most appropriate forum, avoiding duplication and supporting effective cross-sectoral collaboration.