



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 5 October 2010

14089/10

CORDROGUE 81

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

of:	Meeting of the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs
on:	13 September 2010
Subject:	Summary of discussions

1. Adoption of the agenda

The meeting adopted the agenda set out in document CM 4254/1/10 REV 1 with the addition of the following points of information under AOB:

- A new legislation in Ireland on mephedrone;
- Drug coordinators' meeting on November 16, 2010;
- Request of Bolivia on the status of coca leaf;
- ISEC programme.

2. Information on work in other EU bodies

- COSI

The Presidency reported on the state of play of the European pact to combat international drug trafficking which was discussed at the COSI meeting on 7 September 2010.

A delegation suggested the creation of a matrix for the subgroup work similar to the one developed for covering the activities in West Africa. However, COM stressed that no parallel work should be done especially since the existing matrix is adapted each year by the General Secretariat of the Council.

- COAFR

The Presidency stressed that there is a deterioration of the political situation in Guinea Bissau and an increase of drug trafficking. In Sahel, there has been implementation of a new strategy as there are fundamentalist and terrorist groups in the area.

- Other questions

As regards Latin America, the situation is constantly deteriorating in Mexico and Central America. The meeting was informed that the Presidency plans to invite for the HDG scheduled on 21 December 2010 the new Director of UNODC.

3. Prevention of harm associated with the use of illicit drugs in recreational settings: draft Council Conclusions

The Presidency presented the above-mentioned draft Council Conclusions (doc. 12847/10 CORDROGUE 68).

DE delegation suggested to delete the term alcohol as this is outside the mandate of the HDG group. This concern was supported by the FI delegation.

While agreeing in principle, the Presidency responded that poly-consumption could be addressed and in the present context the mention of alcohol was not separated from the use of illicit drugs.

EMCDDA also insisted that in the recreational settings where this phenomenon is prevalent it was impossible not to refer to alcohol. Furthermore, according to an EMCDDA study, alcohol used in recreational surroundings leads to risky behaviour such as drug abuse.

Questions were raised about the meaning of the term “recreational settings” and the use of the term “recreational user”. The Presidency explained why such a term was employed and the COM informed that this term had already been used before. However, the Presidency promised to search for a new compromise term.

Following a discussion on the terms “recommended” and “mandatory” safety features on page 4, paragraph 3 the Presidency suggested splitting the sentence in order to show what is mandatory and what is recommended.

At the request of several delegations the COM informed that the flagship initiative mentioned in paragraph 6 was an initiative prepared by DG SANCO aiming at promoting health which will be launched next year.

The Presidency concluded by inviting the delegations to provide their written comments on the draft Conclusions by 20 September 2010 and informed that a revised draft Council Conclusions would be discussed at the next HDG meeting and hopefully be adopted.

4. Mephedrone: state of proceedings

The Presidency gave an overview on the progress of the procedure concerning mephedrone provided by Council Decision 2005/387/JHA.

A representative of the COM informed that they received the EMCDDA risk assessment report (doc. 12658/10 CORDROGUE 67) in the beginning of August and the COM should in conformity with the procedure submit an initiative in October. For the time being, it is unclear whether the COM will put or not mephedrone under control.

The Presidency invited the delegations to have their positions on the issue ready for the next HDG meeting to be held in October.

Many delegations praised the report of EMCDDA on mephedrone as it is used as a basis for the national decision to put mephedrone under control.

An issue was raised on the length of the procedure and if COM could not speed up the process and provide its decision on mephedrone quicker as many Member States have already put it under national control. The representative of the COM stated that the COM has to follow the deadlines established by Member States in a Council decision.

The Presidency concluded that for the next HDG meeting the discussion could be divided into two topics: proposal to put mephedrone under EU legislation or not and a more general assessment of the Council Decision itself. A questionnaire is being prepared by EMCDDA and will be issued later.

5. Preparation for political dialogue with:

- Russia (15 September)

The Presidency informed the meeting about the agenda and the practical details of the meeting.

- Ukraine (15 September)

The Presidency informed the meeting about the agenda and the practical details of the meeting. The latest initiatives concerning EU-Ukrainian relations were reminded.

- Andean Community (11 October)

The Presidency informed the meeting about the practical details of the meeting with the Andean Community. The Presidency said that different strategies and policies regarding drugs can be discussed and the discussion would not focus only on reduction of drug abuse. Presidency advised not to discuss the bilateral issues such as the Bolivian request concerning coca leaf during the forthcoming meeting.

The Presidency informed that they will be also talking in November with the USA embassy and the LAC presidency about the forthcoming troikas and their draft agendas will be presented during the HDG meeting in October. Delegations were invited to submit suggestions.

A representative of the COM noted that the preparation of the CND could be on the agenda of the dialogue with the USA as well as the issue regarding the EU visa system. CZ delegation informed that there was a growing problem in Czech Republic with the abuse of amphetamine and since the USA has a lot of experience in dealing with this problem, this item could also be included into agenda. FI delegation proposed to ask the USA to provide examples of the control of drug production as the USA is a leading country in drug production.

6. Preparation for the Dublin group (14 September)

FR delegation introduced the agenda of the forthcoming Dublin group meeting.

COM then expressed its will to have a thematic debate on precursors and to talk about the reform of the Dublin group presented by France.

FR delegation recalled that the Dublin group is an informal group and one of its advantages is its open atmosphere. Therefore, Dublin group should stay an information and discussion forum. However, some positions could be coordinated. FI delegation noted that they have put a reservation to all proposals on the extension of the Dublin group mandate.

7. Review of United Nations Questionnaires

The Presidency presented the process of the revision of the UN questionnaires which started a few months ago. It was recalled that Council conclusions were approved on 12 February 2010 regarding systems for collecting information on drugs and that at the HDG meeting of 14 July 2010, COM had suggested coordinating the responses of the delegations.

The delegations were informed that the meeting in Vienna to finalize the questionnaire was postponed to 11 to 13 October 2010. However, if agreement during the Vienna meeting is achieved, the questionnaire should be adopted in December and then be applicable as from January 2011. The representative of the COM stressed the need for an in-depth questionnaire.

The representative of EMCDDA reminded that currently two systems exist to evaluate data concerning Europe: the UN system and a more sophisticated EU system. Therefore, it should be ensured that the results of these two surveys would not be contradictory.

The Presidency prolonged the deadline for sending written comments till 17 September 2010. Subsequently a common document will be prepared and provided to delegations.

8. Inventory of activities in West Africa: update

The Presidency reported that the last version of the matrix dated 9 July 2010 was sent to delegations on 23 July 2010. The meeting was invited to consider how this document could be used and how to avoid duplication, also regarding the USA projects in West Africa.

The Presidency invited the delegations to think about the priorities and better coordination of the matrix so that this issue could be further developed during the October HDG meeting.

9. Paris Pact: round table in Vienna on 7 and 8 October 2010

The Presidency informed that the delegations were provided with the conclusions of the Expert Round Table on Central Asia and with a draft agenda for the forthcoming Expert Round Table on Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries which will take place in Vienna on 7-8 October 2010. The Presidency suggested that an oral presentation should be made on the conclusions of these two meetings during the October HDG meeting.

10. AOB

- The IE delegation informed that mephedrone has recently been put under national drug legislation.
- Drug Coordinators meeting on November 16, 2010

The meeting was informed that the traditional drug coordinators' meeting will be organized on November 16. The invitations will be sent to delegations and registration is already available online. Delegations were asked to register by October 26.

- Request of Bolivia on the status of coca leaf

At the request of the FR delegation the Presidency gave an overview of the situation. According to the procedure set in the UN Convention, if a draft amendment has not been rejected within 18 months, it will be adopted. The deadline to react to the Bolivian proposal is 31 January 2011.

The Presidency invited the delegations to prepare their national positions and called for adoption of a harmonized EU position on the issue. The Presidency also stressed that the EU decision has to be based on the scientific evidence and not on the political objectives.

Some delegations suggested to find out the positions of the other countries, first of all the USA on the Bolivian request. The Presidency noted that such an attempt has been made, but the countries are hesitating to declare their position and are waiting for other countries to do that first.

The Presidency would try to prepare a document for the October HDG meeting which would indicate the lowest possible common denominator of the EU Member States on Bolivian request. Several points of view would be possible:

- to take a political decision not to support Bolivian request;
- to allow the growth of coca leaf for the traditional use;
- to collect the scientific evidence about the harm of coca leaf for health before making a decision;
- to refer to the WHO to learn if they still keep their position on coca leaf.

- ISEC programme

A representative of the COM informed that the deadline of the new call for proposals for the ISEC programme was October 29. Delegations were invited to urge their Member States to participate in the programme.