



news release

from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

No. 6/2002 – 03 July 2002

UN DRUG CONTROL OFFICE, EUROPEAN MONITORING CENTRE DEVELOP 'COMMON LANGUAGE' TO ADDRESS GLOBAL DRUG PROBLEM

Two agencies identify key areas for future cooperation

Vienna, 9 July 2002. The United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP) and the European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) are expanding their cooperation in monitoring international drug trends and initiating effective responses. In a ceremony in Vienna today, Antonio Maria Costa, the Executive Director of ODCCP, and Georges Estievenart, Executive Director of EMCDDA, signed a new agreement on inter-agency cooperation.

"This agreement highlights the cooperation in drug demand reduction as a new key element in UN drug control efforts. It helps us increase information-sharing on best practice and most effective strategies. Enhanced monitoring standards will also improve our ability to react to new drug trends and develop early warning systems and appropriate responses," Mr. Costa said.

Mr. Estievenart noted that considerable progress had been made as a result of closer collaboration between EMCDDA and ODCCP. "Through the development of harmonized indicators we now have a common language for describing the drug problem that provides us with a basis for developing more effective responses," he said.

The two parties signed Memorandum of Understanding in March 1998 as a formal basis for their cooperation. Considerable benefits of such cooperation include the development of a standard global information base on the drug situation and the identification of best practice models to allow countries to respond more effectively to drug problems.

Mr Costa and Mr Estievenart have amended the Memorandum of Understanding to cover new areas for closer cooperation. They include improved understanding of the spread and consequences of new drug trends, such as the emergence of new synthetic drugs.

The following areas were identified for enhanced co-operation:

In the field of Epidemiology

- Co-operation in order to facilitate national reporting and the analysis and dissemination of **European data**.
- **Development and harmonisation of indicators**, methodological procedures and technical guidelines.
- Activities in support of both **the United Nations and European union Action Plans**.
- Cooperation with international partners in **supporting the development of drug epidemiological systems**.

In the field of Drug Demand Reduction

- Identification of **effective strategies** for prevention, treatment and reducing the health and social consequences of the misuse of drugs.
- **Sharing experience** between the two organisations (e.g. EDDRA system*).

In the field of New Synthetic Drugs and Amphetamine Type Stimulants

- **Raising general awareness of new drug trends** in particular the consumption of new synthetic drugs.
- **Sharing experiences in the field of early warning systems on synthetic drugs, including new consumption patterns and toxicity and related health hazards**.
- **Improving the information available** to facilitate a better understanding of changing drug patterns and trends.
- **Developing mechanisms for exchange and reporting of standardised results** from and between networks.

Activities relating to Legal Information Systems

- The UNDCP and the EMCDDA will share **relevant information, research on legal information, laws and regulations adopted to implement the international drug control treaties** provided by Member States of the European Union, Norway and the candidate countries.

Activities relating to Drug Supply Reduction

- The UNDCP and the EMCDDA will identify the most effective way in which to organise particular activities in compliance with their respective mandates and competences and to **develop cooperation on appropriate information exchange**.

* <http://www.emcdda.org/responses/methods-tools/eddra.shtml>

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