



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 7 July 2004

11267/04

CORDROGUE 59

I/A ITEM NOTE

from : General Secretariat
to : COREPER/Council
Subject : Draft Council Resolution on Cannabis

1. At its meeting of 6 July 2004 the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs reached agreement on a draft Council Resolution on Cannabis as contained in annex.
2. On this basis COREPER is asked to invite Council to approve the draft Council Resolution on Cannabis as set out in annex.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON CANNABIS

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. Recalling the European Union Drugs Strategy 2000 – 2004 and the Action Plan on Drugs 2000 – 2004, as well as the Implementation paper on demand and supply reduction to deliver the EU Drugs Action Plan, in particular section 14.1;
2. Conscious of the advances made in implementing the Strategy and Action Plan and also conscious of the fact that much work remains to be done in order to achieve the objectives;
3. Noting that cannabis ranks first in terms of the quantity, the number of seizures and drug law offences reported within the European Union;
4. Concerned about the role of organised crime in the large-scale trafficking of cannabis towards and within the European Union;
5. Noting that cannabis continues to be the illegal substance most commonly used in all Member States and that its use is increasing in most countries across the European Union, especially among young people;
6. Concerned about the changes in patterns of use, towards more frequent and regular use, and also concerned about the steady increase in cannabis-related demand for treatment;
7. Concerned about very high THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) content found in cannabis seized in Europe and noting the need for research on the health effects of this rise;

8. Conscious of the advances in the science of cannabis during the last decade, there is still need for further research in order to obtain a better understanding of how cannabis affects the brain and concerned about the effects that the increased use of cannabis among the very young might have on vital social and cognitive functions, such as concentration and attention as well as the ability to learn and sort information and also concerned about any links between cannabis use and mental health problems such as anxiety and depression;
9. Concerned that the perceived risk of harm from the use of cannabis might be falling among young people;

HEREBY ENCOURAGES

10. Member States, through their Heads of Europol National Units, and Europol to consider, within available resources, the establishment of an Analysis Work File for the collection, analysis and dissemination of criminal intelligence on international organized cannabis trafficking in the framework of law enforcement action at the level of the European Union;
11. Member States and Europol to consider the setting up of Joint Investigative Teams with a view to dismantling criminal networks involved in large scale trafficking and distribution of cannabis and, to that effect, designate the necessary law enforcement capacity;
12. the EMCDDA, within its work plan, to continue to monitor the situation regarding the use of cannabis and to analyze epidemiological and other relevant information on patterns of use, including how changes in those using cannabis intensively or/and in high dose are reflected in the number of people experiencing problems and/or becoming dependent, including also conditions for effective prevention and treatment, and examples of best practice, and to consider preparing a scientific monograph to inform the policy debate;

INVITES

13. the European Commission and Member States, within their respective sphere of competence, to enhance the dialogue and cooperation between the Union and cannabis producing regions, in order to strengthen the Union's efforts to support alternative development and to facilitate the cooperation on combating the trafficking of cannabis from those regions into the Union,
14. the European Commission explicitly to include, to the extent possible, research on cannabis in the Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration activities and also invites Member States to encourage new and ongoing research activities in the field of cannabis, especially regarding dependency and health risks;
15. Member States to improve their demand reduction strategies, and to recognize the essential role of local communities in this work, by taking measures to make young people conscious of the health and social risks linked to the use of cannabis;
16. Member States, in their research and preventive work, to consider taking measures aimed at enhancing the communication with cannabis users, especially the very young, in order to better understand the underlying causes behind its use and the prevention should be focused on specific target groups, based on facts and avoid messages being inconsistent with life and experience of the targeted people;
17. Member States to consider taking measures, such as information and training for parents, teachers, media professionals, prison staff and police officers about the health and social risks linked to the use of cannabis;
18. Member States to promote networking among health and education professionals on cannabis related issues, especially regarding prevention, early identification and interventions as well as treatment, to further the exchange of information and experiences on good practice;

19. Member States to endeavour to prevent the spreading of cannabis within the places of imprisonment;
20. Member States to take measures against cultivation and trafficking of cannabis within the Union;
21. Member States in accordance with national legislation to consider taking measures against Internet sites providing information on cultivation and promoting the use of cannabis;

RESOLVES

22. to take these issues into consideration in the development of the new European Union Drugs Strategy and the new Action Plan on Drugs.
