



European Union  
Statement on the occasion of the

Intersessional Meeting 22-25 October 2018

Commission on Narcotic Drugs 61<sup>st</sup> session

Vienna, 22 October 2018

Chapter 3: Operational recommendations on supply reduction and related measures; effective law enforcement; responses to drug-related crime; and countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation.

Madam Chair,

The European Union and its Member States wish to thank you for organising this intersessional meeting in which we can exchange on drug supply reduction and related measures.

The EU strives to achieve a multidisciplinary, multi-agency, integrated approach to effectively tackling drug supply and drug-related crime. In this respect we would like to highlight the role of EUROPOL – the European Union's agency for law enforcement cooperation which supports its Member States in preventing and combating all forms of serious international and organised crime and terrorism. We would also like to emphasise the important role played by EUROJUST which contributes to improving judicial cooperation in the fight against serious crime.

In order to reinforce the efforts, we aim to have a balance between preventing and tackling the consequences of crime. Our tool for the co-operation and co-ordination of actions on all dimensions and between all stakeholders on the national and EU level is the EU Policy Cycle for organised and serious international crime. This intelligence-led methodology is used to identify and prioritise the most pressing threats associated with organised and serious international crimes for the period 2018-2021. The operational actions to be implemented in the specific antidrug priorities of the current EU Policy Cycle for organised and serious international crime aim:

- to disrupt the activities of Organised Crime Groups involved in the wholesale trafficking of cannabis, cocaine and heroin to the EU;
- to tackle the criminal networks involved in the trafficking and distribution of multiple types of drugs on EU markets;
- to reduce the production of synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances in the EU and to dismantle Organised Crime Groups involved in their production, trafficking and distribution.

The illicit online trade in goods and services has been recognised as a key threat to the safety of EU citizens in the Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA) 2017 and is also being tackled as part of the EU's coordinated response to serious and organised crime – the EU Policy Cycle for organised and serious international crime from 2018 to 2021.

We have well developed tools for data collection, research, analysis and reporting on drug-related matters. The collection of policy relevant, reliable and objective data is essential in order for the EU and its Member States to be effective in the decision making process. The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) has developed and published guidelines for a number of drug supply indicators on markets, crime and supply reduction, which streamline and improve understanding and monitoring of the drugs phenomenon in the EU. The further development of these indicators is addressed annually under the coordination of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction.

While heroin is still responsible for the bulk of drug-related harms in the EU, emerging concerns for the EU are the cocaine and synthetic drugs markets. Europe is being targeted as a lucrative market for cocaine traffickers and several indicators suggest its availability is rising, leading to increased harms. Amphetamine, methamphetamine and MDMA consumed in the EU are manufactured in the EU, but they are also being exported to other countries and producers are quick to react to (or anticipate) controls making this the most dynamic of the drug markets in the EU. Potent synthetic opioids, the likes of which have caused mass casualties in the US, although present at relatively low levels in the EU remain a key challenge and there is no room for complacency.

An effective drug precursor control and monitoring system is a cornerstone of the EU's drug supply reduction strategy. In 2013 we revised the EU drug precursor legislation in order to better address the problem of non-scheduled substances via a 'catch-all-provision' and a 'fast-track' procedure to schedule new substances. And the EU has just started with a new evaluation of our drug precursor policy which may lead to further changes. The EU continues to work closely with key third countries and regions. The EU and its Member States are also active and committed members of the Precursor Task Force of the INCB, which provides a unique forum for multilateral and operational cooperation. We commend the INCB for coordinating this important work.

The cooperation with industry is another pillar of the EU's drug precursor policy. In 2017, we have finalised new 'Guidelines for Operators' and these have been actively promoted to our economic operators.

Moreover, the EU is not only studying but takes action to address this threat. EU Member State law enforcement agencies, as well as EUROPOL, have been involved into the 2017 takedown of Hansa and Alphabay – two of the largest darknet markets: a coordinated law enforcement action which ranks as one of the most sophisticated takedown operations ever seen in the fight against criminal activities online. Moreover, at the end of 2017, EUROPOL adopted the "*Drugs in Europe: Bold law enforcement response*" initiative which aims, notably, at increasing the operational impact of multilateral law enforcement cooperation through the adoption of a new methodology focusing on high value targets of interest in multiple jurisdictions and the creation of a highly specialised darknet team.

The EU Action Plan on Drugs for 2017 to 2020 provides also a strengthened response to the newly-emerging health and security challenges in the area of illicit drug use and trafficking. While maintaining and updating the core policy areas and cross-cutting themes of the overall EU Drugs Strategy 2013-2020, the new Action Plan 2017-2020 identifies new priority areas for action, including the monitoring of new psychoactive substances as well as the use of new communication technologies for prevention of drug abuse and evidence gathering on the potential connection between drug trafficking and financing of terrorist groups, organised crime, migrant smuggling or trafficking in human beings.

More significantly, the EU commits to tackling drug-related financial flows as the EU Member States have agreed to increase the number of financial investigations and encourage its relevant authorities to focus on confiscation and recovery of proceeds of crime, including on money laundering, corruption and other criminal activities in all investigations of organised crime.

Finally, the European Union will continue to fund several cooperation programmes working on drug supply reduction worldwide (e.g. EL PAcCTO working against Transnational organised crime, the Cocaine Route programme with SEACOP, AIRCOP and CRIMJUST working in Latin America, in the Caribbean and in West Africa, EU-Action against Drugs and Organised crime (EU-ACT), working along the Heroin route, - to name a few) and the European Union will also renew its financial support to the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre – Narcotics (MAOC (N)), platform which works to fight illicit drug trafficking by sea and air, in particular in the Atlantic which has an outstanding record of operations.

Madam Chair,

dear panellists,

The EU and its Member States remain committed to taking actions in the area of drug supply reduction.

Thank you!

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