



PRESS RELEASE

European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

Thursday 11 June 1998, Lisbon.

UN 'Drug Summit': EMCDDA Director welcomes demand-reduction declaration as chance to translate political plans into action

World leaders from some 150 States left the UN General Assembly Special Session on drugs (UNGASS) yesterday having approved a series of proposals for combating the problem world-wide through co-ordinated action over the next decade.

The three-day 'Drug Summit' set benchmarks for the international community with three resolutions: a Political declaration; a Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction; and a five-part resolution with collective measures to enhance international co-operation to counter the world drug problem.

The above-mentioned measures included action plans to: combat Amphetamine Type Stimulants (ATS); promote international co-operation on eradicating illicit drug crops and on alternative development; control precursors; promote judicial co-operation; and counter money-laundering.

In adopting the Political Declaration, Member States committed themselves to achieving significant and measurable results in reducing the illicit supply and demand for drugs by 2008. The Declaration calls on States to strengthen their domestic laws and programmes by 2003 to deal with such issues as money-laundering and synthetic drugs, increased drug prevention among young people and enhanced co-operation between nations to catch and prosecute drug traffickers. Nevertheless, varying policies described at the Session underlined the widely differing approaches world-wide to tackling the drugs problem.

The Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction aims to assist governments in setting up or enhancing demand-reduction programmes by 2003. The Declaration contains standards to help governments design effective prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programmes and calls for the provision of adequate resources. The groundbreaking document proposes a balanced approach which, for the first time, acknowledges the responsibility of both consumer and producer nations.

Speaking from the UNGASS in New York, EMCDDA Director Georges Estievenart fully endorsed the Guiding Principles, particularly the section stating that drug demand-reduction programmes should be based on a regular assessment of the nature and magnitude of drug use and abuse and drug-related problems in the population. Estievenart said: 'We all welcome the concrete steps taken in New York to design and implement, at national and international level, a more balanced approach to the global drugs problem. To reach this goal, the Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction and its consistent implementation will be particularly helpful. The Guiding Principles give us a real chance to translate political intentions into concrete action and hard facts'.

Finally, regarding the review of the drug-control regime, the General Assembly considered a report of an expert group to review the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and to strengthen the UN machinery for international drug control. The report stressed, among others, that the effectiveness of the UNDCP could be enhanced via institutional changes and improvements in its funding arrangements in order fully to address its mandate and responsibilities.

Please contact Kathy Robertson, EMCDDA. Tel: (351 1) 811 3000. Fax: (351 1) 813 06 15.