



FACT SHEET from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AT EMCDDA

President Barroso underlines central role of EMCDDA in informing drug policy

(31.10.2006, LISBON) **President of the European Commission José Manuel Durão Barroso** paid his first visit to the **EU drugs agency (EMCDDA)** today as part of a round of meetings in Lisbon. This is the first time the **EMCDDA** has played host to the head of an EU institution.

Meeting with **EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz** and members of the agency's scientific and administrative staff, the President of the Commission was presented with the latest overview of the European drug phenomenon ahead of the upcoming launch of the **2006 Annual report on the state of the drugs problem in Europe**. The report will be presented at a press conference at the European Parliament on 23 November ⁽¹⁾.

President Barroso was also briefed on the soon-to-be adopted **revised EMCDDA mission statement** ⁽²⁾. This follows a proposal by the European Commission in 2005 to recast the agency's founding mission to help it rise to new challenges presented by the drug situation. The regulation, which is expected to enter into force in the coming weeks, will enable the agency to play a more active role in monitoring new methods of drug use, especially polydrug use, including the combined use of licit and illicit psychoactive substances.

The President was also informed of the EMCDDA's cooperation with candidate countries, Third countries and the neighbours of the **European Union**. Last month the agency forged closer ties with the **Federal Drug Control Service (FDCS) of the Russian Federation** which will result in a future exchange of information on: drug use and trafficking; drug-related crime; and new drugs and associated patterns of use.

During the visit, the President underlined the central role of the **EMCDDA** in informing drug policy in the EU and serving as the European reference point on drugs. In particular he acknowledged the agency's invaluable contribution to the Commission's evaluation of the EU drug strategies and action plans.

While at the EMCDDA, President Barroso also addressed a meeting of the Assembly of Agencies' Staff Committees, comprising around 40 participants from the staff committees of some 20 EU agencies. This event was hosted by the EMCDDA Staff Committee from 30–31 October.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ Details on the launch of the *2006 Annual report* may be consulted from 6 November at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu>

⁽²⁾ The regulation was drawn up according to a 'codecision procedure' http://ec.europa.eu/codecision/index_en.htm (based on the principle of parity between the European Parliament and Council, so that neither may adopt legislation without the other's assent).