



## **Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit trafficking in Drugs**

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### **Declaration adopted at the 16<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference of the Pompidou Group**

*We, the Ministers of the participating States and representatives of the European Union meeting at the 16th Ministerial Conference of the Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking (hereafter Pompidou Group) on 19 and 20 November 2014, in Strasbourg:*

*Congratulating* the Pompidou Group under the French Presidency and Maltese Vice-Presidency for the results achieved under its 2011-2014 Work Programme, and recognising that the Group

- generated its output in a timely manner that meet the needs of policy makers thus contributing to more effective responses to drug related-issues;
- has proven its flexibility and ability to react timely and adequately to emerging challenges and changes by making good use of the new flexible working methods adopted at the 15th Ministerial Conference;
- continues to play an important role in the international drug policy sphere and the interplay of institutions involved therein;
- continues to highlight fundamental human rights as a cornerstone in drug policy;
- provides added value to its member States and cooperating countries and institutions through innovation, implementation of practical solutions, pro-active approaches and cross-sectoral cooperation;
- is an important bridge to countries of the neighbourhood of Europe at large and beyond thus proving its viability as an enlarged partial agreement of the Council of Europe;
- links policy, research and practice in a unique and practical manner;
- welcomed 6 new member States and 1 observer State, bringing the number of member States to 36.

*Whilst being concerned about*

- the continued high level of availability and use of licit and illicit drugs and related harms, and the number of drug related deaths;
- the ever increasing number of new psychoactive substances in parallel with rapidly increasing prevalence rates;
- emerging challenges from new communication and information technologies, as well as new modes of distribution, significantly affecting demand and supply reduction measures in drug policy;
- the global financial and economic crisis in Europe and the related austerity measures having already brought about and may imminently exacerbate consequences related to the health of the individual and of the population as a whole, as well as the cohesion of our societies;
- the risk that discriminatory attitudes towards people who use drugs that can undermine risk and harm reduction, drug treatment, social re-integration and the potential for recovery.

*Recalling* the obligations of States under the United Nations and the Council of Europe Conventions to protect fundamental rights and freedoms, in particular the right to life and human dignity, the right to protection of health, the prohibition of any type of discrimination as well as the right of children to be protected from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychoactive substances,

*Reaffirm*

- our commitment to ensure that drug policies are based on the principles of human rights and become transversal and integral of any drug strategy or action plan, thus underlining the importance of the Council of Europe's pivotal role in this field;
- our intention to further pursue the consolidation of the Pompidou Group as a bridge with European countries, their neighbourhood and beyond, in particular in the countries of the Southern Mediterranean rim and the countries in the South East and East of Europe;
- our determination to provide added value and complementarity to the international efforts to curb illicit drug trafficking by cooperation and concerted action with other European and international organisations;

*Endorse* the policy papers adopted by the Permanent Correspondents of the Pompidou Group at their 69th and 73rd meetings on

- providing guidance to policy makers for developing coherent policies for licit and illicit drugs;
- protecting public health by ensuring that essential services in drug policy under austerity are maintained (the Athens declaration);
- preventing risks and reducing harm linked to the use of psychoactive substances.

*Encourage governments:*

- to further develop drug policy with a comprehensive approach towards licit and illicit substances, as well as addictive behaviours in general, including measures aimed at preventing risks and reducing harms associated with the use of psychoactive substances;
- to observe a meaningful policy coherence between all sectors related to drug policy by avoiding measures that adversely affect other policy areas or cancel each other out;
- to further consolidate their efforts to effectively react to the emergence of new psychoactive substances;
- to continue international cooperation on effective precursor control and effective prevention of precursor diversion;
- to increase the effectiveness of international efforts to prevent trafficking of illicit drugs through enhanced cooperation between different sectors of law enforcement, including customs and border control agencies, as well as other relevant sectors;
- to continue promoting participation in networks, joint initiatives and professional training as a meaningful and practical form of international cooperation as demonstrated by Pompidou Group activities such as the Airports Group, Network of Precursor Control, MedNET, EXASS Net including drug policy cooperation in South-East Europe, or the Executive Training for Drug Policy Managers;
- to initiate and support immediate political action to mitigate the impact of economic crises, particularly on the most vulnerable ;
- to guarantee broad coverage, accessibility and quality of essential services for all irrespective of any constraints ;
- to actively contribute to a constructive debate leading up to and at the United Nations General Assembly Session on Drugs (UNGASS) 2016.

*and mandate the Pompidou Group to*

- further develop the links with civil society and promote active cooperation between the governmental and non-governmental sector;
- promote the application of and respect for human rights principles in all aspects of drug policy;
- to promote policies that ensure gender relevance in drug policies;
- addressing the potential and challenges of the internet in reducing drug supply and demand;
- support members States in their efforts to develop and implement drug policies in a coordinated and coherent way ensuring an effective balance between demand and supply reduction;
- continue capacity building towards the provision of an effective continuum of care in drug treatment and rehabilitation services with particular reference to the inclusion of residential facilities, in particular prisons and detention facilities;
- facilitate debate on possible input for the UNGASS 2016 and an active participation in the process leading up to it.

We pledge our support for the 2015-2018 Work Programme on *'Drug policy and human rights: new trends in a globalised context'*. To ensure an effective implementation of the work programme we commit to actively participate in the Pompidou Group's activities; and to make the best use of the Group's products and outputs with a view to create a significant impact on society.