



PRESS RELEASE

European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

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EMCDDA AND UNDCP UNITE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS

Memorandum of Understanding between the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)

A Memorandum of Understanding formally establishing co-operation between the Lisbon-based European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) was signed on 13 March in Vienna by EMCDDA Director, Georges Estievenart, and UNDCP Executive Director, Pino Arlacchi.

The Memorandum formally establishes co-operation between the two bodies in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter and as foreseen by Article 12 of the Council Regulation setting up the EMCDDA.¹

The UNDCP, the body responsible for co-ordinating and spearheading UN drug control activities, aims to ensure greater unity of purpose and coherence of action in the global fight against drugs. To do so requires complementarity and non-duplication of effort across the UN system. The overall task of the EMCDDA is to produce 'objective, reliable and comparable information at European level concerning drugs and drug addiction and their consequences'. The overall picture of the drug problem in Europe provided by the Centre facilitates informed decisions and policies made at both national and Community level.

The two organisations are thus uniquely equipped to deal with the growing burden of the drug problem. The co-operation symbolised by the signing of the Memorandum will be a major step forward in national, European and international efforts to combat this global issue. Co-operation between the two agencies shall be based on the principles of appropriateness, reciprocity and work-sharing based on complementarity.

The Memorandum actively unites the EMCDDA and the UNDCP in their efforts to: improve the collection and analysis of data; develop and promote data-comparison methods; and enhance the dissemination of information. It also promotes optimal use of available information and resources, regular consultation and exchange of technical experience. For its part, the EMCDDA will promote the incorporation of data on drugs and drug addiction gathered in the Member States or emanating from the Community into international monitoring and drug-control programmes, particularly those established by the United Nations and its specialised agencies, especially the UNDCP.

The two organisations will each designate a staff-member to ensure the effective implementation of the Memorandum while regular review meetings will be held by senior officials. The terms of the Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed in 2000.

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Mr Tucci, UNDCP, Vienna. Tel: (43 1) 21345 ext. 4116.**

¹ Regulation (EEC) No. 302/93 of 8 February 1993. Article 12 states that the 'Centre shall actively seek the co-operation of international organisations and other, particularly European, governmental and non-governmental agencies competent in the sector of drugs'. The six priority partner organisations of the EMCDDA are: the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe, Interpol, the Europol Drugs Unit (EDU) and the World Customs Organisation (WCO).