



# ***PRESS RELEASE***

**European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction**

Friday 5 June 1998, Lisbon.

**UN 'Drug Summit': EMCDDA Director welcomes appeal for strengthening  
demand reduction and information strategies world-wide**

The United Nations General Assembly will convene a Special Session on the world drug problem in New York from 8–10 June 1998 marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.<sup>1</sup> The Special Session will give the international community the chance to assess the existing global drug situation, review the current control regime and forge a forward-looking strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Of utmost significance at the Session will be the political declaration Member States are expected to adopt to reassert their strong commitment to drug control as a priority at both national and international levels. Representatives of over 130 governments attending the Special Session's final preparatory session in Vienna in March agreed on a draft text setting out a comprehensive global strategy designed to tackle simultaneously all aspects of the drug problem. The text proposes a drastic and simultaneous reduction of both illicit supply and demand for drugs by 2008.

Commenting on the Special Session, EMCDDA Director, Georges Estievenart, expressed his appreciation for the draft 'Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction' also up for adoption in New York. He welcomed the recognition of the need for a proper assessment of the demand for drugs in all world countries and regions, a step being taken at European level by the EMCDDA as the EU specialised agency working on drugs.

Dubbed the 'Drug Summit', the event marks a critical new juncture in the global fight against drug supply and demand. For the first time, national leaders from all over the world will gather together to agree to: the first global strategy to control drugs; the first international agreement on demand reduction; and the goal of substantially reducing and eradicating the illicit cultivation of opium, coca and other narcotic crops in the next ten years. They will also agree to find solutions to the problems posed by amphetamines and stimulants and to identify specific timetables to strengthen and harmonise Member States' laws on money laundering, extraditing drug traffickers, and sharing information on drug cartels.

The Summit will feature plenary sessions for the adoption of specific political declarations and operational resolutions, as well as symposia. The latter will address such topics as money laundering; judicial co-operation; children, youth and drug abuse; drug abuse and HIV/AIDS; and drugs and development. There will also be a workshop on media coverage of the global drug problem.

Organised by the Vienna-based United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP),<sup>2</sup> the Summit is expected to be the largest multilateral gathering ever held on combating illegal drug trafficking and abuse.

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<sup>1</sup> Special Session press kits are accessible on <http://www.undcp.org/index/html/>. For further information: <http://www.undcp.org/undcp/gass/content/htm/>.

<sup>2</sup> A Memorandum of Understanding between the EMCDDA and the UNDCP was signed on 13 March 1998. See *DrugNet Europe* No. 11 (<http://www.emcdda.org>).