



# **PRESS RELEASE**

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

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***'By the turn of the century we must replace ideology with science'  
says McCaffrey at US–EU Drug Forum***

The US–EU Informal Drug Forum meeting at the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) Lisbon, concluded this afternoon with a series of innovative ideas for US–EU co-operation and a regular exchange of ideas and research information on drug-related matters.

Marking the end of an eight-day fact-finding tour of European cities, General Barry McCaffrey underlined the importance of collecting accurate and comparable data – the mandate of the EMCDDA – in informing the decisions of drug policy-makers. At the Forum, he emphasised his commitment to an open exchange of ideas and information between Europe and the United States, affirming that 'by the turn of the century we must replace ideology with science' in the development of drug prevention.

Mr Bernard Kouchner, French Secretary of State for Health, expressed the view that meetings such as the Forum should be held on an annual basis to discuss specific topics such as synthetic drugs. Georges Estievenart, Director of the EMCDDA, and Franz-Josef Bindert Chairman, will propose this idea to the Centre's Management Board for consideration.

Both European and US representatives stressed the diversity of drug consumption and recognised that drug epidemics were frequently regional phenomena that crossed national boundaries both in the European Union and the Americas. It was pointed out that while there were many problems, there was no single solution. A particular issue for decision-makers was how to translate policy into action at a local level.

The meeting opened the door for co-operation on a number of items:

- Shared discussion of data collection problems
- Improved ways of tracking drug trends worldwide
- Information exchange on methods for identifying newly-emerging trends in different localities
- Open access to the US national drug clearing house
- Sharing of experience in developing performance and outcome measures of policies and interventions.

The Forum involved some 30 high-level US and European officials and took place outside any formal framework.

**For further information on General McCaffrey's visit, please contact: Alfred Head or Ana do Carmo at the US Embassy, Lisbon. Tel: (351 1) 770 2443. Fax: (351 1) 727 6791/727 3300.**

**For more details on the ONDCP: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/>**

**For further information on the US–EU Drug Forum, please contact K. Robertson at the EMCDDA.**

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