



FACT SHEET from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon

EUROPEAN UNION–RUSSIA RELATIONS

EU and Russian drugs agency chiefs meet in Moscow to discuss plans for future cooperation

(12.7.2012, LISBON) The EU and Russian drugs agency chiefs meet in **Moscow** today to further their strategy for cooperation. At the talks, **Wolfgang Götz**, Director of the EU drugs agency (**EMCDDA**) and **Viktor Ivanov**, Director of the Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation (**FDCS**), will be focusing on the agencies' exchange of information and expertise and laying groundwork for joint activities over the next three years. Also present will be **Paul Griffiths**, EMCDDA Scientific Director.

Following the meeting at the **FDCS**, the **EMCDDA** visitors will meet **Ambassador Fernando Valenzuela**, Head of Delegation of the EU to the Russian Federation. This visit takes place in a 'milestone year' for the **EU** and the **EMCDDA** as they take stock of progress made in the drugs field and define new horizons. Key upcoming developments include a new EU drugs strategy for 2013–20 and a new EMCDDA strategy for 2013–15.

The **EMCDDA** and **FDCS** cooperate under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in the margins of the **EU–Russia summit** in October 2007 (Mafra, Portuguese Presidency of the EU) ⁽¹⁾.

The MoU allows for an exchange of information and expertise in a number of areas, including:

- illicit drug use and trafficking in the EU Member States and the Russian Federation;
- new drug types and emerging drug use trends;
- technologies for the production of illicit drugs;
- newly emerging trafficking methods;
- legislative and administrative measures to reduce illicit drug use; and
- prevention of drug-related crime.

Today's meeting will open with presentations from the two agencies on the drug situation in the EU and the Russian Federation, including insights into the heroin problem and drug-related HIV. Also described will be challenges in tackling drug trafficking, preventing crime and reducing drug supply and demand.

Particular focus will be placed at the meeting on monitoring new drugs entering the market. New psychoactive substances were detected in the EU last year at the rate of around one per week (49 new drugs) ⁽²⁾. Reflecting the importance of international cooperation in this area, representatives of the **FDCS** attended the first landmark international forum on new drugs organised by the **EMCDDA** in Lisbon in 2011 ⁽³⁾. Information sharing in this area and online monitoring of the new drugs phenomenon will be among the points explored at the talks.

The agreement between the two agencies foresees the participation of experts in meetings as well as training and capacity-building activities. Since the signing of the MoU, the agencies have moved forward in this area, with **FDCS** members recently participating in the **EMCDDA**'s first-ever 'Reitox week', which brought together some 45 countries ⁽⁴⁾. The event was based on the premise that cooperation in the drugs field must cross borders in order to build an accurate picture of the drug situation and responses to it in the EU and its neighbouring countries. Looking to the future, the prospect of a Russian expert working at the **EMCDDA** will be explored, as will the possibility of the partners' exchanging experience on building national drug observatories ⁽⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁾ See news release 6/2007 at www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2007

⁽²⁾ See www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2012/2

⁽³⁾ See www.emcdda.europa.eu/events/2011/new-drugs-forum

⁽⁴⁾ See www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2012/fs-1

⁽⁵⁾ See www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/joint/ndo-handbook