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NOTE

from : XIth High Level Meeting of the EU/LAC Coordination and Cooperation
Mechanism on Drugs (26-27 May 2009 in Quito)

to : Horizontal Working Party on Drugs

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Subject : EU/LAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs -
Annual Report March 2008 - May 2009

This report is the result of the regular analysis of the activities carried out in the framework of the Mechanism and seeks to contribute to the improvement of its efficiency and to the achievement of its objectives.

This Report covers the period from March 2008 to May 2009.

1. Vth Summit of Heads of State and Government LAC-EU

During the Fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Lima, Peru, on 16 May 2008, it was recalled to further the bi-regional cooperation, in accordance with the principle of shared responsibility, in confronting the world drug problem and it was indicated that the LAC-EU Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs should be strengthened as a framework for a more efficient bi-regional dialogue.¹

¹ Fifth Summit Latin America and Caribbean - European Union, Lima, May 16, 2008, Declaration of Lima "Answering to the Priorities of Our Peoples".

The Technical Committee carried out the necessary work in this matter, in order to prepare the ground for suitable consideration of this topic by the High-Level Meetings to be held before the next Summit of Heads of State and Government LAC-EU (May 2010).

Moreover, during the Senior Official Meetings (SOM) held in the framework of the LAC-EU Summit Process, in Brussels and Buenos Aires on 5 November 2008 and 20 March 2009, respectively, the Co-presidencies of the Mechanism reported on the follow-up actions of the Technical Committee with respect to the mandate from the Heads of State and Government.

2. Xth High Level Meeting of the Mechanism

The Tenth High-Level Meeting of the Mechanism was held in Hofburg Palace, Vienna, under the co-presidencies of Bolivia and Slovenia. On this occasion, LAC-EU continued to analyse the bi-regional cooperation priorities identified in the previous meeting; in this context, the Non Paper presented by LAC including some ideas for the development of cooperation projects, in fulfillment of the priorities established in the Port Spain Declaration of May 2007, was considered. In addition, other aspects related to the drug situation in both regions were considered, as well as the working procedures for the Mechanism and the draft Resolutions to be presented in the next CND (Vienna, 10-14 March 2008), following the meeting of the Mechanism.

The Xth High Level Meeting of the Mechanism approved the Hofburg Declaration.

3. Technical Committee Meeting LAC-EU

Five meetings of the Technical Committee took place during this period: on 15 July and 17 December under the co-presidencies of Ecuador and of France, and on 26 February, 16 April and 5 May under the co-presidencies of Ecuador and the Czech Republic.

The meetings principally considered the agreements reached at the V Summit of Heads of State and Government LAC-EU and at the Xth High-Level Meeting of the Mechanism, and in particular those referring to the strengthening of the Mechanism, to the improvement of its efficiency, and to deepening bi-regional cooperation.

On 17 December 2008, the Technical Committee adopted a series of Working Procedures of the Mechanism to be submitted for approval at the next High Level Meeting.

4. Coordination in the framework of the Mechanism

During certain meetings of the Technical Committee, there was an exchange of information regarding preparations for the 52nd Session of the CND, and in particular the High Level Segment held on 11 and 12 March 2009.

On 13 March 2009, in the European Commission delegation offices in Vienna, a coordination meeting was held to exchange points of view between representatives of LAC, the EU and the consultants hired by the European Commission to identify a regional cooperation project in the field of Anti-drug Policies and other aspects related to cooperation within the Mechanism.

5. EU-LAC Cooperation

A. Cooperation in the framework of de Mechanism

Intelligence Sharing Working Group LAC-EU (ISWG)

The ISWG established within a Community-funded project, has built on the progress made at meetings in Río de Janeiro (17-18 October 2006) and in Curacao (22-23 May 2007) with further meetings in Cartagena (13-14 November 2007), Kingston (28 - 30 May 2008) and Martinique (5-6 November 2008). The final meeting of the Group was held in Havana (20-22 May 2009). Developments have included the creation of systems for reporting to Europol the intelligence from cocaine seizures, acceptance of common security objectives to protect shared intelligence, language training in Spanish and English for operational officers, the first exchange of operational officers to identify targets for joint operational investigation and the offer by Spain of software to coordinate multi-source investigations. With the final meeting in Havana (20-22 May 2009), the UK has concluded its successful management of the ISWG.

LA and EU Programme of Cooperation in antidrug policies (COPOLAD)

A new Programme of Cooperation in anti-drug policies is being prepared, based on the conclusions of the consultants hired by the EC to identify areas and activities to achieve this. It will aim to strengthen bi-regional cooperation on policies in the action against drugs at the national, sub-regional and bi-regional levels. The resources for this Programme were established in the EU Indicative Multiannual Programming for Latin America (2007-2013).

B. EU cooperation projects for LAC

European, Latin American and Caribbean cities in partnership (CICAD)

Officially launched at the Santo Domingo City Forum in April 2008, this initiative implemented and coordinated by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD/OAS), has involved a total of 1,125 persons (professionals, city mayors and deputy mayors, treatment specialists and professionals, judges and prosecutors, amongst other institutional representatives). A total of 47 cities have participated in the three collaborative actions being carried out. Twelve intercity agreements have been developed during this period. This initiative has its own web page explaining the developments of the project.

Prevention of the diversion of drug precursors in the Latin American and Caribbean region (PRELAC)

The project started on 1 March 2009. The specific objectives are to strengthen the capacities of national administrative control authorities of selected countries within the region to prevent the diversion of precursors. The project also aims to improve communication between countries through a web-based computer programme that will allow the beneficiaries' rapid communication on exports/imports of precursors. Furthermore, the objective is to strengthen the cooperation among national administrative control authorities of participating countries through a better knowledge of each others' systems and of the overall trends in precursor diversion in the region through enhanced exchange of information. Trainings and seminars will bring together administrative control authorities with representatives of industrial associations where a common code of conduct and reporting process and voluntary collaboration by the industrial chemical operators will be promoted.

C. Other Community-funded inter-regional initiatives

Law Enforcement and Intelligence Cooperation against Cocaine Trafficking from Latin America to West Africa (CO-LAC-AO)

On 1 May 2008, a European Police expert joined the UNODC Office in Bogotá posted as Principal Technical Adviser to carry out tasks of intelligence sharing between the relevant institutions and the EU liaison officers with competence in combating of drug trafficking. A secure computer system was established (Sistema de Intercambio de Información Seguro / Secured Exchanged Information System - SIIS) among the users. At present, access to the system is available to the Directors of the participating institutions as well as to the liaisons officers. So far, several missions in Africa and Latin America have been carried out to keep informed about the project. Five training and capability-building courses were organized in Colombia; two having been attended by African law enforcement experts.

Cooperation between LAC countries and the countries of West Africa: the Cocaine Route Project

Under the EU's Instrument for Stability, a large-scale project has been adopted at a trans-regional level to fight organised crime along the cocaine route. This programme is complementary to the activities supporting the fight against organised crime in Western Africa, Latin America and Caribbean. The main focus is on enhancing the capacity for international cooperation of law enforcement and judicial services of the countries concerned for contributing to the fight against international criminal networks, more specifically to strengthen information and intelligence capacity on land, sea and air borders at national, regional and inter-regional level, increase the effectiveness of investigation, disruption and prosecution by law enforcement agencies including strengthening the fight against financial organised crime.

Mainstreaming alternative development

The Community-funded project was completed in August 2008 and provided a platform for debate and information on mainstreaming the alternative development in ideas, programmes, communities, governments and agencies across the globe. Particular focus has been on application in the 7-10 countries of South/East Asia and the Andean region/Latin America in which the main agro-narcotic crops are grown. Several documents on the alternative development, drugs control and drugs environment have been produced and disseminated. Workshops and meetings for the relevant stakeholders from both regions were held. More than 600 key people have shared in the implementation of the project, representing the counter-narcotics network established. Estimated 30% of these people have attended workshops and meetings first-hand. Many more have gained access to the information developed by the project.
