

SEMDOC

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LIMITE

CORDROGUE 58

NOTE

from : Horizontal Working Party on Drugs

to : Permanent Representatives Committee

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Subject: Cooperation mechanism for Latin America

1. At the meeting of the Dublin European Council in December 1996, agreement was reached on setting up a cooperation mechanism for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Madrid European Council had asked for a cooperation mechanism with these regions to be created at its meeting in December 1995.

2. At the VIIth Institutionalized Rio Group/European Union Ministerial Meeting on 7 and 8 April 1997 in Noordwijk, Ministers decided to hold a meeting of experts on drugs in 1997 as part of the EU/Rio Group dialogue.
3. At its meeting on 15 September 1997, the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs agreed on the arrangements for the mechanism set out in the Annex.
4. The Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to confirm that agreement and to submit it to the Council as a basis for discussion with the partners of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Cooperation mechanism for Latin America and the Caribbean

- (a) The cooperation mechanism for Latin America and the Caribbean will be set up on the following basis:
- the mechanism will be of an informal nature;
 - the mechanism will be composed of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Commission and the Member States most affected, together with the Latin American and Caribbean countries concerned by the drugs issue, with appropriate regional representation;
 - the mechanism will meet once a year at the level of senior officials responsible for the fight against drugs and will be chaired by the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, in close association with the Commission. The secretariat for the mechanism will be provided by the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union;
 - the mechanism's work will be closely linked to the activities of the Rio Group;
 - the mechanism will address the problem of drugs in all its entirety (production, trafficking, demand, precursors, money-laundering, etc.);
 - the work will focus on general matters concerning the region as a whole, with due account being taken of the particular characteristics of the regional areas;
 - the mechanism does not affect the activities pursued under the existing forms of cooperation with States in the region and it will avoid any overlap;
 - the Latin American and Caribbean countries will have to appoint their own representatives in the mechanism;
 - within the European Union, the mechanism's work will be prepared by the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs with a contribution from other competent Working Parties, in particular the Working Party on Drugs in the framework of the CFSP (CODRO).

(b) Lightweight structures

The Caribbean

A regional cooperation and implementation mechanism, in which Member States and partners (CARIFORUM) would participate, should be set up in Barbados, under the auspices of the Commission.

Andean countries

The dialogue initiated between the Andean Group (GRAN) and the European Union should continue at regular intervals in order to ensure practical follow-up to recommendations and to the technical assistance set up.

Central America

A mechanism associated with the San José Group could be set up to facilitate dialogue and ensure follow-up to recommendations on drugs in this region.

Other

If it proves necessary to deal with the specific requirements of other countries, the creation of lightweight structures could be contemplated in order to optimize measures to combat drugs.

- (c) The operation of the mechanism will be assessed two years after its entry into force.