COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

of 24 July 1997

on the health aspects of the drugs problem

(97/C 241/04)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. IS OF THE OPINION that a multidisciplinary approach, aiming at supply and demand reduction, is essential in the fight against illegal drugs;

2. IS OF THE OPINION that, in dealing with drug dependence, the protection of public health is a priority because of the serious threat illegal drugs represent to public health;

3. TAKES NOTE of the fact that the Commission, in close cooperation with the Member States, has begun to implement the programme of Community action, adopted by Decision No 102/97/EC [1], on the prevention of drug dependence within the framework for action in the field of public health (1996-2000);

4. POINTS OUT that the programme of Community action concerns the first 15 actions of the 66 actions mentioned in the report on drugs adopted on 15 and 16 December 1995 by the Madrid European Council;

5. WELCOMES the first annual report of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), set up by Regulation (EEC) No 302/93 [2], on the drugs problem in the European Union (1995);

6. WELCOMES the Commission report which has been forwarded to the European Parliament and the Council in accordance with Article 18 of Regulation (EEC) No 302/93;

7. AGREES with the Commission that there is no need to adapt or extend the tasks of the EMCDDA;

8. AGREES with the Commission that the EMCDDA must continue to give high priority to supplying the Community and its Member States with objective, reliable and comparable information at European level on demand and reduction of the demand for drugs;

9. TAKES the view that synergy between the activities of the EMCDDA and activities resulting from other relevant European Union programmes and instruments should be promoted as much as possible;

10. NOTES that the Joint Action of 17 December 1996 adopted by the Council on the basis of Article K.3 of the Treaty on European Union concerning the approximation of the laws and practices of the Member States of the European Union to combat drug dependence and to prevent and combat illegal drug trafficking [3] also concerns the health aspects that are taken into account under the programme of Community action on the prevention of drug dependence;

11. UNDERLINES, for the purposes of applying Article 5 of the said Joint Action, the importance of establishing a system for the rapid exchange of data on new synthetic drugs and the assessment of the risks connected with them, including their health and social risks and the possible consequences of a ban, so that the control measures applicable to psychotropic substances in the Member States may also be applied to specified synthetic drugs.

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[1] OJ No L 19, 22. 1. 1997, p. 25.

[2] OJ No L 36, 12. 2. 1993, p. 1. Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 3294/94 (OJ No L 341, 30. 12. 1994, p. 7).

[3] OJ No L 342, 31. 12. 1996, p. 6.