European Union

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
54th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, 21-25 March 2011
Statement by Hungary on behalf of the European Union
Agenda item INCB
21-25 March 2011

AS DELIVERED

Thank you, Madam Chairperson,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The Candidate Countries Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[1], Iceland, Montenegro and Turkey, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and the potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, as well as Armenia, Georgia, Liechtenstein, Norway and Republic of Moldova associate themselves with this statement.

2. The European Union would like to congratulate the International Narcotics Control Board on the 100th Session of the Board that took place in February 2011.

3. Madam Chairperson, the EU appreciates the work done by the International Narcotics Control Board on the report for the year 2010 depicting the global drug control situation. It provides up-to-date information which may assist governments in addressing the world drug problem.

4. In relation with the work and mandate of the INCB, the European Union would like to reiterate the importance of adhering to the International Drug Control Treaties. The Treaties provide the necessary legal framework for cooperation among Governments in the field of drug control and the European Union welcomes the almost universal adherence, which they enjoy. The European Union commends the INCB on its activities to promote universal application of the international drug control treaties.

5. We acknowledge the recommendations provided by the last INCB report to governments, the United Nations and other relevant international and regional organisations.

6. We would like to highlight that the primary goal of the Treaties is to safeguard the health and welfare of humankind; therefore, specific and greater attention should be devoted to drug demand reduction strategies in order to achieve a more balanced approach in implementing them.

[1] Croatia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

7. The EU takes note of the focus of this year's report on drug related corruption and its impact, including the findings of the Board, that: *Drug-related corruption can have an extremely detrimental effect on the credibility and efficiency of the criminal justice system and weaken the rule of law. It can also have an adverse effect on the credibility and legitimacy of other social institutions. It fuels public distrust in both public and private sector initiatives.* The EU would like to stress the importance of implementing measures that systematically analyse and address risk factors in civil service that may have a causal effect on misconduct and corruption, by raising awareness about professional ethics as well as embrace cooperation with civil society organisations to disclose and address corruption. The EU notes the expertise and mandate operated by UNODC, as well as other organizations in the field of corruption, and underlines the importance of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, in force since 2005, and its Conference of the Parties to review the implementation of effective measures to counter corruption.

8. The European Union has also taken note of the Report's analysis on synthetic cannabinoid receptor agonists and on recently identified "designer drugs" such as the stimulant substance mephedrone. We recognise the primacy of the treaty mandate given to the WHO in this field. The EU has specific legislation in place to address new psychoactive substances that emerge on the EU market. Substances that raise specific concern are risk assessed after which they can be made subject to criminal justice measures and penalties. In 2010, a risk assessment was conducted on mephedrone, on the basis of which the Member States decided to submit the substance to control measures and criminal penalties. Furthermore, the European Commission will soon present an assessment of the existing EU legislation in this field and may propose to amend it in order to better address new challenges and developments. The EU does notice with concern that at UN level, the Expert Committee on Drug Dependence of the World Health Organisation is encountering an ongoing lack of resources to carry out risk assessments on psychoactive substances as part of its mandated tasks under the UN Conventions.

9. The European Union would like to thank the INCB for preparing a supplement on the availability of internationally controlled drugs: Ensuring adequate access for Medical and Scientific Purposes. The EU shares the findings of the Board, that e*nsuring availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and preventing their diversion are not contradictory goals; in fact, action to achieve these two objectives can be in synergy if measures are correctly and fully implemented. A well-educated and functioning control-system administration is a prerequisite for ensuring availability, as it will be able to determine the quantities required and will identify shortages and problems in distribution. A functioning control-system administration will also be a responsible partner for cooperation with professional and consumer associations*.

10. We took note with great concern of the data, that 90 per cent of the global consumption of opioid analgesics is limited to about 10 per cent of the world's population. It is alarming, that around 80 per cent of the global population has insufficient analgesia or no analgesia at all when suffering from severe pain[2]. Therefore the European Union particularly welcomes the recommendations of the Board contained in the supplement, and calls for their implementation.
In this framework, the EU would like to reiterate the importance of the efforts by the INCB in close cooperation with WHO to improve the availability of drugs for medical purposes through the Access to Controlled Medications Programme, and encourages them to continue this cooperation and develop research and innovation to assist countries in better assessing their

[2] 2009 data

medical needs for such substances, especially at adequate costs, and in establishing adequate legislation to ensure the availability of such medications for the relief of pain and suffering. In this context, the EU would like to draw attention to the specific concerns expressed by the WHO about the availability of ketamine and ephedrine, and to the importance of adequate access to essential medicines such as methadone and buprenorphine for substitution treatment.

11. Madam Chairperson, with your permission, I would now like to hand over to my colleague from the European Commission who will complete this statement by speaking on the subject of precursor control.

Thank you, Ms Chairperson