

EUROPEAN CITIES AGAINST DRUGS



DECLARATION

A number of European cities have taken the initiative of organizing a Conference for Cities Against the Legalization of Drugs. One of the aims of the conference is to adopt a resolution to enable towns that have not participated in the conference to support its work.

The purpose of the conference is to increase cooperation between cities, to provide inspiration and hope for areas with particularly difficult drug problems. The signatories to the resolution will affirm their decision to fight against the spread of drugs.

WE REALIZE...

...that the abuse of illicit drugs is now a very serious problem in many European cities. A recent survey made by the European Parliament shows that there may be millions of drug abusers within the EC alone.

The demands to legalize illicit drugs should be seen against the background of current problems, which have led to a feeling of helplessness. For many the only way to cope is to try to administer the current situation.

But the answer does not lie in making harmful drugs more accessible, cheaper and socially acceptable. Attempts to do this have not proved to be successful.

We believe that legalizing drugs will, in the long term, increase our problems. By making them legal, society will signal that it has resigned to the acceptance of drug abuse.

The signatories to this resolution therefore want to make their position clear by rejecting the proposals to legalize illicit drugs.

POSITIVE ALTERNATIVES

We, the European Cities Against Drugs, wish to care for our inhabitants. We wish to create cities that are secure and attractive to live and work in. Our work against drugs is undertaken because we care for individuals, families and communities. The fact that we have not managed to turn the rising tide of drugs must therefore lead to renewed and vigorous efforts.

Our intention is to develop positive alternatives to legalizing drugs.

THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

We believe that the foundations for future efforts must be a restrictive drugs policy based on the UN's Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961, amended in 1972), the Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971) and the Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) say that we "shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs..." (Article 33).

We accept the definition of illicit drugs as above resolutions use.

This resolution is in line with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme; and the resolutions adopted in Madrid, Paris, New York, Bogotá and Buenos Aires.

The fight against drugs is a complex matter. There must be interaction between measures aimed at reducing both supply and demand. We can pool various experiences and support each other's efforts by engaging in a dialogue and working together.

IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT

In the current situation it is important to emphasize preventive measures and cooperation.

- Preventive measures stop people from being enticed into taking drugs and being harmed by them. It also reduces their dissemination. The use of drugs is normally spread by person-to-person contacts. All users, regardless of whether they are dependent or not, constitute a large market for drugs, which in turn generates increased drug production. Our main effort regarding drug addicts must be to give them adequate treatment and counselling.

- Since no single measure can solve all problems, we must work together. Different approaches must be used together, for example cooperation between the educational system, the social service, voluntary organisations, health and medical services and the police.

HOWEVER,

In order to tackle drug problems we must emphasize that a wide spectrum of measures are needed, to be applied in cooperation between the authorities, voluntary organisations and individuals.

Some measures to be taken could include:

- Strengthening the role of the family in resisting drugs;
- Preventive programmes in schools, colleges and work places;
- Developing methods leading to earlier detection and taking constructive measures;
- Rehabilitating advanced addicts;
- Supporting research and evaluation.

DECLARATION

- We, the signatories to this resolution, reject all demands for legalizing illicit drugs.

- We wish to develop positive strategies in order to address the current difficult problems related to abuse, rather than legalizing drugs.

- We wish to develop cooperation between cities in order to share experiences and progress our work.

- We draw the attention of our Governments to the above resolutions.

- We request that our Governments respect and with determination apply those conventions and agreements regarding drugs which they have signed.

SIGNATORY

to the European Cities Against Drugs Resolution

name

Position

CITY

Country

Date
