



ECAD's sister organisation founded in Melaka



Mr Zaini, Mr Hallberg & Mr Tay Bian How

ECAD's Tomas Hallberg was invited as a guest of honour to a five day conference that took place in "Melaka Historical City" in Malaysia, October this year. The conference aimed to establish a new organisation, "Asian Cities Against Drugs" (ASCAD). Melaka had during a number of years discussed with other cities in Asia the necessity to form an organisation for co-operation around drug issues. They found that European Cities Against Drugs could be a good example of such organisation. Mayor of Melaka, Mr Zaini Bin Md. Nor, as Mayor of Stockholm Carl Cederschiöld did back in 1994, took the initiative of organising the conference and promised to stand for the initial costs of the new organisation.

250 delegates from 14 countries, among them 14 mayors, unanimously adopted the "Melaka Resolution" and approved a draft of the Constitution. The conference appointed a Board and decided where to hold the next year conference, which is to be in Porto Princess, Philippines.

The city of Melaka and The National Drugs Agency of Malaysia organised this conference in collaboration with the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme.

Besides plenary sessions, the conference participants got an opportunity to visit a larger treatment centre, 550 beds, for convicted drug abusers.

Many of the delegates witnessed that the common expressions for producing countries, transit countries and consuming countries are no longer accurate.

"How many heroin abusers you say you have in Sweden? Nine thousand? Send them all down to us, we have 6 million of those so we won't notice the

difference," joked one of the delegates from Pakistan. He added in earnest that Pakistan used to regard the opium smuggling merely as a transit problem. By now the internal abuse of this drug has become greater than in many other countries of the region.

"Subutex prescription occurs without any control here in Malaysia," said Dr Zinuddin bin Abdul Bahari from Kuala Lumpur.

"One can simply call to a doctor and get a monthly amount of Subutex prescribed at once. The pharmaceutical company Schering-Plough cares only about sales and does not take into account if there is some psychosocial treatment connected to the pre-



A "patient" of the treatment centre

scription," Dr Zinuddin continued.

The drug problem is extensive in this region. In Malaysia, one drug abuser is registered every half an hour.

Please see page 3 regarding the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme

Swedish network

The Fourth conference of the Swedish ECAD members took place in Uppsala in October this year. 65 delegates from 20 cities participated in the event. The focus for this year's discussion was the anti-drug fieldwork carried out by Uppsala, the host city. Uppsala presented a co-operation project between local authorities, police and infectious disease control department. As a result of the joint efforts, there is a lower percentage of "problem" drug users and addicts with HIV/Hepatitis in the city than in the country as a whole.

The next conference is planned to take place in September 2005 on Gotland.

For more information about the Uppsala project please contact the ECAD representative in Uppsala Jan Dahlman at jan.dahlman@uppsala.se

ECAD seminar in Riga

On September 30, 2004, the ECAD Office in Latvia organised a seminar on current issues regarding the combating drugs in the Baltic States. The seminar was attended by a number of high ranking officials from concerned Latvian governmental and non-governmental bodies. ECAD representatives from Russia and Sweden participated as well.

The Chief for the Riga Criminal Police Ints Kuis said in his report that the drug situation in Riga and Latvia in general became more and more tense. Compared to the same period last year, the number of registered drug-related crimes has increased 12 per cent and reached 2 per cent of the total number of offences. Two thirds of all drug-related offences in Latvia are registered in Riga, the capital city.

See Page 4

One third of young Europeans have already tried cannabis

European Commission did a Special Standard Eurobarometer survey on attitudes towards drugs in 2002 with 7,687 people aged between 15 and 24, representatives of the European Union. To study the evolution of the attitude of the target group with regard to drugs, Commission decided to carry out the study again two years later using the Flash Eurobarometer with the same questionnaire and a similar interview methodology. For this survey, 7,659 young people between the ages of 15 and 24 in the European Union were interviewed face-to-face between 19 April and 13 May 2004. The countries studied during both waves of the survey represent the 15 Member States of the Union before the enlargement last May 1st. Although the Union now includes 25 countries, the expression "European Union" is used here to refer to these 15 Member States.

The objective of the report is to present the main results obtained from this survey and particularly to compare them with the results observed previously at the European Union level.

The report is available at

http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/flash/fl158_en.pdf

This second wave of the survey on the behaviour and attitudes of young people with regard to drugs has confirmed certain observations made during the first wave in 2000. It has above all contributed to revealing the evolution of this problem over the last two years.

- It seems easy to get hold of drugs in 2004. This easy acquisition mainly concerns places where people go out in the evening. In 2004, 79% of young respondents tend to agree that it is easy to get drugs at parties, and 76% in pubs or clubs. This percentage drops to 63% for the ease of getting drugs near their home and to 57% in or near school.
- Young Europeans are also somewhat more confronted with cannabis and other drugs than in 2002. This increasing confrontation with drugs seems to mainly affect aspects associated with cannabis. In 2004, 68% of young respondents know cannabis consumers and one person out of two was proposed cannabis. One third of young Europeans have already tried cannabis. These figures are rising as compared to 2002.



The socio-demographic profile of the young European who is most easily exposed to cannabis, meaning who knows consumers or has been offered cannabis or other drugs, corresponds to a man, between 20 and 24 years old, unemployed or exercising a manual profession and living in a large town. In addition, the profile of a young EU citizen who declares he has tried or consumed cannabis or other drugs is the same.

- Within the European Union, regular consumption of cigarettes is stable and currently affects 37% of young people, whereas regular consumption of alcohol has risen slightly and now affects 47% of young people between 15 and 24 (+ 2 points).
- The main reasons why young Europeans decided to try drugs are similar to those observed in the first wave of the survey. Curiosity is the reason mentioned most often – by 64% of respondents – followed by peer pressure (45%) and thrill seeking (37%).
- Addiction (72%) and lack of willpower (50%) are indicated by the young respondents as the main reasons why it can be difficult to stop

taking drugs.

- Among the consequences associated with drug use, addiction is the consequence mentioned most often by young people (64%). Then, in 2004, mental problems are indicated as the second consequence referred to by 40%, slightly in front of problems with the law (39%). Finally, one-third of young respondents seem aware that contamination by a transmissible disease represents a consequence of drug consumption.
- With regard to the most effective ways to tackle drug-related problems, the survey shows results very similar to those of 2002. Actually, tougher measures against dealers, traffickers (60%) and producers (49%), as well as more treatment and rehabilitation measures (53%) represent the means recommended most often by young Europeans to manage drug-related problems. 42% of young Europeans attest to the effectiveness of information campaigns as a means of managing drug-related problems.



Women, more educated young people and town dwellers give greater preference to treatment and rehabilitation than the other categories of respondents.

- A specialized drug centre proves to be the main vector of information on drugs for a majority of young Europeans (55%). The other sources continue, as in 2002, to be health professionals (44%) and friends (36%). Internet is more in favour in 2004 as a source of information on drugs. This means of information in fact has risen by six points at European Union level.
- Concerning dangers associated with occasional consumption of alcohol, cannabis or ecstasy, 62% of young European Union citizens feel that occasional consumption of alcohol is not dangerous; 34% feel that way for cannabis and only 10% for ecstasy. Therefore, although these figures are slightly lower than in 2002, they show that young people have a very clear perception of the danger associated with the use of synthetic drugs such as ecstasy.
- About one-third of young respondents consider that there is a relation between the consumption of alcohol or cigarettes and drug use. Compared to 2002, this minority has increased significantly at European level.
- About half of the young respondents declare they agree with the idea that drug users should be able to get low-price syringes and needles (49%). This observation holds more for the 20-24 age group and particularly for recent consumers of cannabis and respondents who have tried or consumed other drugs in recent months. Moreover, 47% of respondents tend to agree that people should be punished for using drugs.



The socio-demographic profile of a young European in favour of punishing drug users tends to be a woman, a young person between 15 and 19 residing in a rural area. Understandably, the proportion of consumers of cannabis and other drugs who agree with punishment is significantly lower than the European average.



MORE RESEARCH!

New EU Action Plan on Drugs takes form

The new EU drug strategy 2005-2012 along with the EU action plan on drugs 2005-2008 take form. Clash of opinions on how the drug problem should be tackled is visible.

In December this year, as it is planned, the heads of the governments will adopt a new strategy on how the drug problems will be tackled in Europe. The negotiations – where all the 25 member states need to come to an agreement – take their time. Differences in views have permeated the discussions. The opposing poles are represented by a political line that puts emphasis on reducing drug-related health damage (“harm reduction”) vs. more offensive line that demands combating narcotics on all levels, in any circumstances.

In that draft of the strategy that had been available since the EU Presidency proceeded to the Netherlands, the emphasis was put more upon treatment and reducing drug-related health damage than upon prohibiting the use of drugs. Among the controlling measures, those against the “large-scale” drug production and cross-border trafficking in drugs were underlined instead of taking measures to fight all dealing of drugs, including the street-level.

Though the stream lining of the strategy continues. The Swedish representative at the negotiation table Ralf Löfstedt said that an agreement on a “balanced” strategy has “in principle” been reached.

“Before the Dublin meeting in May 2004 it was about dealing with disadvantages of drug use. Now it is about tackling the drug problem,” continued Ralf Löfstedt. He also said that there would be no goal such as “drug free Europe” in the new strategy though it would aim at reducing all kinds of drug abuse, not only “hard” drug abuse. The Swedish representative underlined that the new EU mandate would be that of complementation of the national strategies which would allow Sweden to continue its restrictive policy with a drug free society as goal.

The issue of small-scale production, which also includes the Dutch “coffee-shop system,” remains unsolved.

Ralf Löfsted noted that the Netherlands as a country holding the EU Presidency has shown a greater will to compromise than before. The Netherlands would like to see the strategy approved before the turn of the year.

A final evaluation of the existing action plan has recently been published by the EMCDDA in collaboration with Europol. It is stated in the evaluation that many of the initiatives of the action plan 2000-2004 are on course or have been implemented. National drug policy co-ordinators have been appointed in nearly half of the “old” EU countries. The incidence of drug-related crimes and the number of drug-related deaths appear to have stabilised and even to have declined. This is partly explained by the facts that heroin use is not increasing and large-scale informative efforts against risk behaviour have been taken. The spread of HIV among injecting drug users has stabilised while the spread of Hepatitis B and C continues. Treatment provisions for drug users have increased and services have been diversified but too few of those who seek treatment become drug free. The upward trend in drug use prevalence has been levelled off on the EU level or even turned downward in some countries.

The evaluation is available at EMCDDA's web site www.emcdda.eu.int. You can read the ECAD's views on the EU action plan 2005-2008 at www.ecad.net

Russian Drug Tsar in London: We are not to relax cannabis laws

“Russia, in contrast to Great Britain, is not yet ready to relax the laws on so called soft drugs”, Viktor Cherkesov, Director of the State Committee on the Control of illegal turnover of the drugs and psychotropic substances stated at the press conference held at the Russian Embassy in London on October 27, 2004.

Commenting on the decision last year by the British government to downgrade cannabis from a class B to a class C drug, the Russian official said that, “We respect the legislation of any sovereign nation. If the Parliament considers possible to change the existing law, it is guided by the estimation of the factual situation and the possibility to combat other, more dangerous types of drugs.

“However we are required to take into account differences in the national characters, traditions and the real drug situation in our country,” Cherkesov pointed out.

According to him, if in the beginning of 90-ies the most abused drug was cannabis and its products (so called “soft” drugs, including marijuana), today the opiates (“hard” drugs, including heroin) took over the drug-market. One of the main tendencies is that drug users switch from “soft” to “hard” drugs.

“In this situation we have no right to take a risk and open a door to the “soft” drugs. They might appear less harmful for health but the consequences are dangerous whatever the case”, Cherkesov said.

/RIA “Novosti”

Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Program

While several organizations are actively involved in combating drug abuse globally, the Colombo Plan is the first and only regional intergovernmental organization, which addresses the issue in the Asia Pacific region. The 22nd Colombo Plan Consultative Committee Meeting held in New Delhi, India in 1972 discussed the economic and social implications of drug abuse and concluded that drug abuse was of growing concern to all member governments. The Consultative Committee decided that the Colombo Plan should start a programme on drugs and the DAP of the Colombo Plan was established in 1972.

The DAP was mandated with the task of consulting with member governments on the economic and social implications of drug abuse, encouraging member governments to introduce special measures such as establishing specialized agencies / authorities to deal with the problem, assist member governments in framing policies and projects to control the problem of drugs, assist in the organization of seminars, workshops and similar activities, and develop cooperative programmes designed to eliminate the causes and ameliorate the effects of drug abuse.

Initially the DAP was funded by the U.S. Government. But subsequently other governments became donors to the DAP. DAP is unique in that in its existence, it is funded totally on voluntary contributions by member countries.

More information at www.colombo-plan.org

ECAD seminar in Riga

From page 1

These statistics might appear not significant in and of themselves, noticed the chief for the Criminal police. Making a judgement, he continued, one has to take into account, that - according to experts' estimations - the incidence of drug-related crimes is in fact 10 times more than the official numbers can show.

Latvia is not unique in registering negative tendencies on the rise. Most European countries show similar developments towards increasing cross-border trafficking in drugs, more dealing of drugs on the street level. At the same time, increasingly more drugs are being seized by the authorities. The latter is true also for Latvia. This shows, the police representative emphasised, that the Latvian police now works more efficiently and target-oriented than for just a couple years ago.

George Zazulin, Director of the ECAD Office in Russia, briefly informed the participants about the main directions of activities

of his office. Firstly, the office supports forming and adjusting the anti-drug policy of the Russian Federation. This is done, among other instruments, through the Centre for Anti-Drug Policy at the St Petersburg State University. Secondly, the office carries out large-scale informative and educational efforts, including regular seminars for the Russian members of the ECAD. In this context, a master program in drug-conflict studies conducted in collaboration with the above mentioned University is a distinguished example of the various tasks assisted by the ECAD Office in Russia. And thirdly, the office publishes educational materials and other literature on the subject.

In conclusion, ECAD Director Tomas Hallberg enlightened the seminar participants about the plans for future activities of the organisation.

*Director of the ECAD Office in Latvia
Andrejs Vilks*

Advisory Board welcomes Helsinki

At its meeting on October 1st in Riga, the ECAD Advisory Board welcomed Helsinki as a new member of the Board. Helsinki is represented by Paula Kokkonen, newly appointed Deputy Mayor for Social Affairs and Public Health.

Paula Kokkonen, former Member of Parliament, has been engaged in health care issues and held a number of international assignments. She succeeded the Lugano representatives Giorgio Salvade and Luca Cao who resigned spring this year after a 10-year work in the Board.

ECAD's Advisory Board welcomes the new member whose qualifications and engagement will become a good energy in the work of the Board!

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Over 1,800 kg of drugs seized

Anti-drug police seized over 1,800 kg of drugs last month in Birjand, in this provincial capital city, a police official said October 30, 2004. During these operations, 1,373 drug smugglers were also arrested and handed over to the judicial officials.

Iran lies on the crossroads of major drug trafficking routes originating mainly from Afghanistan.

More than 3,600 members of Iran's armed forces have been killed in cross-border clashes with drug traffickers during 20 years of instability in neighboring Afghanistan.

According to official estimates, Iran's anti-drug campaign costs the country about \$800

mln annually.

The country is credited with intercepting 80% of the opium and 90% of the morphine worldwide

/IranMania

In the volume 8 No 74 we published Conditions for receiving **Study visit travel subsidy for ECAD member cities**. Paragraph 3 should be read as follows: "ECAD grants a study visit travel subsidy of maximum 500 Euro per study visit". The conditions are always available at www.ecad.net ("**Grants**").

*Our European societies have experimented and evaluated both tolerance and intolerance to illicit drug use and drug abuse. It is our reflection upon this which guides us towards non-use. This in regard to our **countries'** well being.*



ECAD is Europe's leading organisation promoting a drug free Europe and representing millions of European citizens. Drug dealing and drug abuse cause enormous problems in Europe. Nations and their citizens are affected by the consequences of drug abuse. ECAD member cities work to develop initiatives and efforts against drug abuse supporting the United Nations Conventions which oppose legalisation and promote policies to eradicate drug abuse worldwide. Has your city joined ECAD?

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Ry Cooder - "All the money in the world are spent on feeling good."
She said - Huh?