



ECAD Conference in Milan – a notable success



Video-message of A.M. Costa

Coinciding with the Milan fashion week, the municipal authorities had invested a lot of organisation in an issue of rather greater gravity than fashion. As a new ECAD member city, Milan, together with San Patrignano – Europe's largest rehabilitation community, invited all interested to an autumn conference on Strategy, Management and Communication against drug addiction.

Italian Vice-Minister of the Interior, Mr. Marco Minniti and Deputy President of the European Commission Mr. Franco

Frattini were the keynote speakers, and the conference was launched by a video message from UN drug chief Mr. Antonio Maria Costa.

Milano



Comune di Milano

The Mayor of Milan, Mrs. Letizia Moratti led the conference from the beginning to

the end from the conference platform, and made a strong personal impression on the audience with her genuine knowledge and deep engagement.

The international contribution among the speakers included Oslo Commissioner Mr. Torger Odegaard, Director of the Centre of Drug Misuse Research at the Glasgow University Professor Neil McKeganey,

ECAD Russia director Mr. George Zazulin, the Trustee of the Institute for public policy research in London, Lord David Puttnam CBE, Icelandic Minister of Health Mr. Gudlaugur Thor Thordarson, CICAD Project Manager, USA, Mr. Antonio Lomba and ECAD director Tomas Hallberg.

The 200 delegates could continue their discussions on the day's program during a gala dinner hosted by Mayor Moratti at the magnificent

Palazzo Marino.

In connection with the conference, Andrea Muccioli, director

of the San Patrignano Community and one of the keynote speakers, invited the international delegates to a study visit to the largest rehabilitation community in Europe.



Letizia Moratti, Mayor of Milan, led the konferensen all the way



★ ECAD CONFERENCE

UNODC strengthens collaboration with NGOs in drug control

Non-governmental organizations from developing countries will participate more closely in UNODC's anti-drug work in future thanks to funding from the European Commission and the United Kingdom.

A Memorandum of Understanding signed by UNODC and the Vienna NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs acknowledges the key role of NGOs in effective drug control. As UNODC looks to 2008, which was set as a target date for achieving "significant and measurable results" in drug control at the 1998 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the world drug problem, the Organization will undertake a series of



regional consultations with NGOs. Here, they will be able to highlight their achievements in this area and promote them as best practices.

The regional consultations will culminate in an international forum, "Beyond 2008," in mid-2008. This forum will submit recommendations on how to address drug problems today to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the key United Nations drug-related governing body. The EC/UK funding will enable NGOs from Latin America and the Caribbean, North Africa and the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central and South Asia, and South-East Asia to take part in the regional consultations, and thus, contribute to UNODC's drug control efforts.

Source: unodc.org/squisito.org

Hard campaign to legalize heroin

North Wales Police chief constable Richard Brunstrom has said he will be "campaigning hard" for drugs such as heroin to be legalised. In a 30-pages long opus "*Drugs Policy, A Radical Look Ahead*" Richard Brunstrom claims that the "Misuse of Drugs Act 1971" is "not fit for purpose" and "immoral" and needs to be re-voked.

Mr. Brunstrom argues for "a new classification system, a "hierarchy of harm" encompassing all substances of abuse (including both alcohol and tobacco) and based on *identified social harms*, which "should be at the centre of new substance misuse regime - one based upon evidence, not moralistic dogma".

In a report presented to the North Wales Police Authority, he says the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 should be replaced by a new "Substance Misuse Act".

Mr Brunstrom's suggestions have already been criticised by some politicians. The Home Office dismissed this highly controversial idea soon after: "The government is emphatically opposed to the legalisation of drugs, which would increase drug related harm and break both international and domestic law".

The chair of the North Wales police authority, Ian Roberts, said there would be a "full and frank debate" on the issue.

The head of British law enforcement agency, ACOP, Ken Jones QPM, has commented on the Chief Constable Brunstrom's campaign as follows: "This is a complex pernicious global problem. Moving to total

legalisation would, in our view, greatly exacerbate the harm to peo-

ple in this country, not reduce it. It simply does not make sense to legitimise dangerous narcotic substances which would then have the potential to ruin even more lives and our neighbourhoods. ACPO is not aware of any nation which has managed to contain the ravages caused by the universally legal and regulated - supply of tobacco and alcohol..."

In the past, Mr Brunstrom has said drugs laws are out of date and that the police are engaged in a battle which they cannot win. He is now campaigning for drugs to be legalised, and for the class A, B and C system to be scrapped.

His report was prepared in response to the government consultation paper "*Drugs: Our community, Your say*", and the forthcoming Welsh Assembly Government consultation on the all-Wales substance misuse strategy.

The Transform Drug Policy Foundation (TDPF), which describes itself as a charitable think-tank and says drug prohibition is the major cause of drug-related harm to individuals, communities and nations, welcomed Mr Brunstrom's report.

Director Danny Kushlick said: "We are absolutely delighted at Mr Brunstrom's paper. "The chief constable has displayed great leadership and imagination in very publicly calling for a drug policy that replaces the evident failings of prohibition with a legal system of regulation and control for potentially dangerous drugs".

But Alyn and Deeside MP Mark Tami said claiming the legalising of heroin as the only way forward was "blinkered and dangerous".

He said drugs policy was not "black and white" and a more considered approach had to be taken. He also added: "As 280,000 Class A drug users are responsible for half of all crime, taking the risk of legalising such a dangerous drug is foolhardy and I would not wish to gamble so much on the health and wellbeing of our children."

Sources: *Daily Mail* – www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=487067&in_page_id=1770; www.reageramera.blogg.se; <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/7038552.stm>

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It simply does not make sense to legitimise dangerous narcotic substances which would then have the potential to ruin even more lives and our neighbourhoods.

UNODC and San Patrignano: a concrete alternative to drugs and poverty

Squisito!, a unique gastronomical event organized by San Patrignano, the largest drug rehabilitation centre in Europe, took place from 28 to 30 September 2007 in Rimini, Italy.

More than 20,000 visitors took part in the three-day event, which was entirely organized by 1,800 ex-drug addicts who are undergoing rehabilitation in the community of San Patrignano.

For its social and cultural value, Squisito! received the patronage of UNODC. This is an absolute first for a food event; in fact, an entire pavilion of the fair named goodFOOD was dedicated to exhibiting

agricultural projects with social impact.

Among these projects were products grown by small rural farmers in Myanmar and Peru who participate in UNODC's Alternative Development Programme, which has been providing legitimate income-generating opportunities to small farmers previously engaged in the illicit cultivation of opium poppy over the last 30 years. The Programme works with the communities in all stages of agricultural production, from seed selection to marketing assistance. The items presented at the fair demonstrate the end product ready for presentation to the export market.

/By: www.squisito.org



Exit "magic mushrooms"

Dutch cabinet ministers intend to forbid all magic mushrooms. According to the ministers Klink (Public Health) and Hirsch-Balin (Justice) the hallucinations they evoke are dangerous.

Up till now only the dried (magic) mushrooms are mentioned in the Opium law, but now the ministers also want to prohibit fresh mushrooms. For months this has been an issue in parliament especially the judicial aspect, for more than a half year ago the second chamber has insisted for a total ban of paddos (Dutch for magic mushrooms). The discussion found its origin in the premature death of a 17th years old French girl Gaelle



Caroff. Under the influence of magic mushrooms she sprang from a bridge in Amsterdam. Smart shops

and similar provider places will be closed down when the law is not obeyed.

The family Caroff could not understand why dangerous drugs like magic mushrooms are freely available in the Netherlands. Although it is to late for their daughter we hope this ban on paddos will prevent further tragedies.

Hallucinating Frenchman skinned his dog

The Amsterdam prosecutor's office called for a four-month prison sentence on Thursday for a Frenchman who killed and cut up his dog after eating hallucinatory magic mushrooms.

Jeremy Venzin, 29, "ate hallucinogenic mushrooms and smoked cannabis nearly every day in the two weeks prior to the incident," according to a psychiatric study. Police found Venzin in his van on July 13, his motionless nude body covered in the blood of his furry companion. The vehicle was parked along one of the canals in the centre of the Dutch city.

He had slit the dog's throat and then skinned it before cutting it open to pull out the organs. He told police officers that he had killed the dog to liberate it from the demons that were living inside it and that the end of the world was near. During testimony Venzin denied he had made those statements.

AFP / Source: Expatica.com

Once again about "skunk"

The devastating effects of skunk cannabis on the nation's mental health are revealed here for the first time, showing where the drug has hit hardest around the country. Some areas have suffered a tenfold increase in people mentally ill from using the drug. Nationally, skunk smokers are ending up ill in hospital in record numbers, with admissions soaring 73 per cent. The number of adults recorded as suffering mental illness as a result of cannabis use has risen sharply from 430 in 1996 to 743 in 2006.

The government data shows how the damaging effects of the drug have swept across England. Hospital hotspots for cannabis abuse include Manchester, London, Cheshire and Merseyside.

And, as the debate over the drug's dangers continues, figures released by the National Treatment Agency for Substance Abuse (NTA) show that more than 24,500 people are in drug treatment programmes for cannabis – the highest ever.

It is the most commonly misused drug by children, accounting for 75 per cent of those requiring treatment. That's 11,582 under-18s – more than double those in treatment for cannabis abuse in 2005.

And more adults (13,087) are in drug treatment programmes for cannabis abuse than for crack or cocaine.

This news comes as pressure grows on the Government to reclassify cannabis to its former class B status, with the fears of police now being echoed by the Forensic Science Service, which says skunk cannabis – a highly potent form of the drug – accounts for 75 per cent of all seizures.

Cannabis remains Britain's most commonly used illegal drug, with more than 4,000 kilos confiscated by police and customs officers in the first six months of this year.

/by Jonathan Owen

www.independent.co.uk, Oct. 21, 2007



Freedom, security and justice

Civil Society Forum on Drugs in the European Union

75 applications for participation in the Civil Society Forum on Drugs were submitted; ECAD has been chosen among 26 selected organisations bound for the Forum on 13–14 of December. The selection criteria were based on the Green Paper on the Role of Civil Society in EU.

Read more about the Civil Society Forum in Brussels at www.ecad.net

Russia to step up drug control policies

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on setting up a state committee in the country to counter illegal drugs, the Kremlin press office announced on October 20.

According to the resolution "*On additional measures to counter trade in illegal drugs*", the head of the federal anti-narcotics service, Viktor Cherkosov, has been appointed to chair the committee.

The goal of the state committee is to coordinate work on the federal and local level in countering drug trafficking, the decree says. Anti-drugs commissions will be set up in Russian regions, to be led by local governors.

Following the resolution, which takes immediate effect, the committee chairman must name the committee members within a month, and parliament must resolve financing and technical issues for implementing

the decree within three months.

The committee will comprise the president's assisting staff, vice chairman of the Russian Federal council and the parliament, key-actors from over 20 state ministries and departments, Russian Federal Security agency FSB and many other prominent actors.

As a matter of fact, Russia will now indulge in a highly organised system of drug policy coordination, that will exercise control over federal bodies. This implies submitting law-proposals to the president and improving the existing laws in drug policy scope.



/Source: <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20071020/84731189.html>
and www.narkotiki.ru

KHAT: Somali and Swedish organisations make a statement



Khat is a limited issue looking at the problem from the global perspective. The drug is abused most extensively in Eastern Africa, but it is also abused by certain folk groups, fugitives or those, who have moved from this part of Africa to Europe, for example.

The effects of production and abuse of this drug are certainly as big as the consequences of abusing any wide-spread narcotic substances. This drug abuse leads to psychological disturbances, sleeplessness, loss of appetite. Khat has a negative impact on immune system, teeth, potency and leads to a higher blood pressure.

As in many other parts of the world, Khat is an important factor in financing and causing wars and conflicts. Similar to opium and cocaine, Khat is cultivated instead of vegetable crops to respond to the needs of providing for the population. Khat cultivation implies big profit for those, who engage in war-business and contribute to the dissemination of weapons and terror against people and nations.

Khat is not a "vegetable" as many drug liberals in England or Holland would state, it is a highly addictive narcotic substance, which in its effect is close to amphetamines and cocaine.

Since Khat is a "fresh product", which has to be consumed within a short period of time, it shipped to Europe via major international airlines that deliver the drug to Amsterdam and London, for example, to be transported further for export or local consumption.

Khat is a legal drug in many key-positioned European countries. This implies a completely legal entrance into the EU customs area and a possibility for comparatively easy distribution to Scandinavian countries, for instance.

According to the Swedish customs board and the police, Khat is a low-prioritised drug that leads to an extremely low penalty. To commit a severe crime of smuggling this sort of drug it is necessary to smuggle in more than 200 kilo of Khat!



Sofia Modigh, IOGT-NTO



Sofia Garad, SWIS

The undersigned organisations then demand the following:

- The UN has to act to move Khat to the upper part of the narcotic drugs substance list, which is subject to criminalisation for all undersigned UN countries;
- The Swedish government has to act powerfully to make other EU-countries to criminalise production, trade and consumption of Khat in the whole EU. The Swedish government has to review the scale of punitive actions for various types of smuggling, trading and conveyance of drugs to make it more relevant for the police and customs to intervene against the handling of the drug.
- The Somali association and other organisations in Scandinavian countries have to unite and prioritise the fight against Khat. Our family members – women and children first of all - become the victims of this drug. Our liberation and integration is obstructed and can never be completely attained while so many people live under the drug's slavery. Khat is the enemy for all our people! Those who abuse Khat are a disappointment for their own people! We would like to express our gratitude to Mobilisation Against Drugs and Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare. Thanks to their contribution and assistance this international conference has attracted about 90 delegates from London, Vienna and Nordic neighbour countries.

Somali Swedish development and relief association Somali women in Sweden,
SWIS KSN SIMON IOGT-NTO ECAD

/The brochure in PDF-format is available at www.ecad.net/svnet/index.html



ECAD is Europe's leading organization promoting a drug free Europe and representing millions of European citizens. ECAD member cities work to develop initiatives against drug abuse supporting the United Nations Conventions.

Has your city joined ECAD?

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