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*(Information)***COUNCIL****COUNCIL RESOLUTION****of 17 December 2003****on training for drug law enforcement officers**

(2004/C 38/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

- (1) with reference to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances;
- (2) with reference to the Declaration on the guiding principles of drug demand reduction, approved at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session in June 1998;
- (3) bearing in mind the Council Joint Action of 21 December 1998 on making it a criminal offence to participate in a criminal organisation in the Member States of the European Union, as well as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (Palermo, 2000) and the Protocols to it;
- (4) bearing in mind that the European Union Drugs Strategy (2000-2004) points to the importance of reinforcing the fight against organised crime, illicit drug trafficking and related organised crime, as well as other drug-related crime, and stepping up police, customs and judicial cooperation between Member States;
- (5) bearing in mind that the European Union Action Plan on Drugs (2000-2004) states that the Commission is to support, as appropriate, efforts by Member States to improve police, customs and judicial cooperation, notably through exchange and training programmes, taking advantage of the experience and results of existing third-pillar programmes;
- (6) bearing in mind that the Commission Communication on the mid-term evaluation of the Action Plan on Drugs (2000-2004) notes the need to improve police, customs and judicial cooperation, notably through exchange and training programmes;
- (7) bearing in mind the Council Decision of 22 December 2000 establishing a European Police College ⁽¹⁾;
- (8) with reference to the Council Decision of 22 July 2002 establishing a framework programme on police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters (AGIS) ⁽²⁾, which sets out in particular to promote and strengthen the improvement and adaptation of training and of technical and scientific research;
- (9) bearing in mind that the EU Action Plan on Drugs (2000-2004) and the implementation plan on demand and supply reduction point to the importance of identifying new areas, such as the spreading of best practice, training and networking, where action at European level could help reduce drug-related harm;
- (10) with reference to the 2002 annual report from the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, in particular the supply reduction measures, among which it is a priority for Member States to combat organised drug trafficking through the improvement of database systems and crime analysis techniques, together with increased development of international cooperation;
- (11) bearing in mind the Council Recommendation of 18 June 2003 on the prevention and reduction of health-related harm associated with drug dependence ⁽³⁾;
- (12) noting that, among forms of police cooperation, training for relevant institutions in new Member States is of strategic importance;
- (13) bearing in mind the contributions provided by the Member States and their proposals included in the replies to the questionnaire on training regarding the fight against drugs and drug dependence in the EU Member States;
- (14) whereas it is advisable to promote a harmonised approach to training, where appropriate, across all Member States, taking account of the particular significance of the accession of new Member States so as to facilitate the introduction of common and improved standards within the police, customs and judicial cooperation system;

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 336, 30.12.2000, p. 1.⁽²⁾ OJ L 203, 1.8.2002, p. 5.⁽³⁾ OJ L 165, 3.7.2003, p. 31.

- (15) whereas the European Police College's objectives include developing and supporting a European approach to the main problems facing Member States in the fight against crime, by identifying and disseminating best practice and increasing knowledge of national systems and structures and of Europol;
- (16) whereas Member States have built up significant experience in training officers for supply reduction work, which can usefully be shared and passed on to newly acceding States;
- (17) bearing in mind the importance, for effective inter-force co-operation, of consistency in what is learned from training;
- (18) whereas a knowledge of statutorily assigned duties, the ability to distinguish between lawful and unlawful action, the ability to make good use of available legal instruments and technical resources and the skill to apply the various ordinary and special investigation methods to best advantage comprise a stock-in-trade required for optimum operating and cooperating efficiency;
- (19) whereas training helps bring about exchange of knowledge and know-how, for the purpose of sharing best practice;
- (20) considering that drug law enforcement officers require a specific interdisciplinary training approach to develop their various expertise, common cultural, scientific and behavioural motivations, to be shared by all players operating in this field,

NOTES WITH SATISFACTION,

- (21) that the European Police college has included, in its programme 2004 as endorsed by the Council on 2 October 2003, a course on 'International and Cross-Border Crime-Trafficking in Drugs' for senior police officers from the Member States responsible for Police Drugs Trafficking Squads;
- (22) that the European Police College has agreed to undertake the relevant recommendations in the implementation plan on demand and supply reduction, which should help to improve training throughout the European Union in this sector,

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- (23) to continue to contribute to ensuring greater alignment of training tools and methods for the training of drug law enforcement officers across the European Union;
- (24) to address the issue in its relations with the national institutes of the applicant States, also so as to facilitate a mutual understanding of the various police, customs and judicial cooperation systems,

ENCOURAGES ON MEMBER STATES TO

- (25) intensify their efforts in order to adapt training supply, organised at national level, to the constant evolution of the various issues related to the action against drug and to do it in such a way that these elements fall in a global consideration, carried out by the international organizations in this domain;
- (26) adopt training programmes for drug law enforcement officers, taking into account the recommendations and standards developed in this field within the framework of the European Police College;
- (27) carry out, where appropriate with the support of the European Police College, training programmes for the exchange of know-how and best practices between individual Member States' police forces and also between them and others, where there is common approach to operational and intelligence activity;
- (28) have training programmes follow a balanced approach, bringing out the equal importance of supply reduction and demand reduction strategies;
- (29) create a training data base and regularly assess the impact of training received on the work of law enforcement officers;
- (30) provide police and customs authorities with constant opportunities for further improving both their ordinary and their specialist skills, in order to develop operational and intelligence analysis capabilities by upgrading existing human resources.