



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on Afghan troika

*2865th EXTERNAL RELATIONS Council meeting
Luxembourg, 29 April 2008*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The European Union warmly welcomes the Afghan Government representative to the EU/Afghan Troika and would like to re-iterate its support to the Government of Afghanistan and for its National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS). It recalls the primary responsibility of the Government of Afghanistan in tackling the narcotics problem. The EU remains committed to assist in tackling the narcotics trade and the diversion of precursors, which threatens both Afghanistan's stability and prosperity, and the security of the wider region.

We strongly welcome the recent Afghanistan Joint Co-ordination Monitoring Board (JCMB) meeting in Tokyo and the Afghan Governments commitment to accelerate and improve implementation of the NDCS through:

- (i) provision of force protection for eradication in targeted areas;
- (ii) re-structuring and reform of the counter-narcotics trust fund;
- (iii) provincial based planning for CN policy implementation based on the Provincial Development Plans;
- (iv) expansion and effective delivery of programmes to promote licit development, including economic support for licit cash crops and rural industries;
- (v) strengthening of justice and other legal institutions and interdiction efforts;
- (vi) further strengthening of cross-border, regional, and international co-operation for CN activities; and
- (vii) mainstreaming CN into all government policies.

P R E S S

We consider this implementation vital. Efforts to improve the rule of law with an effective police and justice system are essential. Bringing to justice those involved in narcotics, improving security and provincial governments control, and fighting corruption are also pivotal in tackling the narcotics problem in a long term way.

Afghan leadership and delivery is critical and the EU stands ready to assist by pursuing its comprehensive strategy in combating the opium economy, through a combination of improved economic opportunities, social development and better security and governance. EU assistance 2007-2013 focuses on these issues.

Concerning security, the EU fully supports the work of the ESDP police mission, EUPOL, and calls on Member States and international partners to continue the deployment of quality police personnel. The EU also stresses the paramount importance of the programme of measures under the Instrument for Stability to support Afghanistan in promoting rule of law through support to the reform of the Justice Sector.

The EU acknowledges there are no quick fixes. The experience of Pakistan and Thailand show that the fight against poppy cultivation takes time and that the application of a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach is essential. In line with the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy, combining the fight against drug trafficking, strengthening rural livelihoods, reducing demand, and strengthening state institutions, particularly criminal justice and law enforcement are priorities. We also welcome the inclusion of the aspect of countering corruption as a complementing element in the fight against drugs in Afghanistan, as put forward in the report to the JCMB on the implementation of the NDCS.

As part of this long-term endeavour UNODC will have to consider broadening and strengthening its range of reporting. This could help the Government of Afghanistan and the international community determine the success of all pillars of the NDCS.

The EU acknowledges and supports the Government of Afghanistan's opposition to licit opium cultivation.