

Press Release

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Council of Europe proposes the drafting of a legal instrument to combat "pharmaceutical crime"

Moscow, 24.10.2006 – Meeting in Moscow on 23 and 24 October, the participants in the conference "Europe against Counterfeit Medicines", which took place in the framework of the Russian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, proposed that a legal instrument be drafted to combat pharmaceutical crime, counterfeit medicines and other medicinal products included, and to safeguard the health of Europeans.

The participants agreed that the following elements should be taken into account in preparing the future convention:

- definition of pharmaceutical offences as serious crime;
- penalisation of the manufacture and distribution of counterfeit medicines;
- establishment of a network of Single Points of Contact in all sectors concerned, especially those of health and law enforcement;
- adoption at national level of provisions to control the quality of components for pharmaceutical uses, packaging material and manufacturing processes in accordance with the standards laid down by the European Pharmacopoeia;
- intensified co-operation between law enforcement agencies at the national and European levels.

The participants urged all the competent authorities in this field, manufacturers, wholesalers, pharmacists and governmental and non-governmental organisations to combine their efforts to implement effective anti-counterfeiting measures. They also asked the governments of the 46 Council of Europe member states to inform the general public of the risks and consequences of taking counterfeit medicines.

The text of the declaration will be available on www.coe.int.

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 46 member states.