

Press Release

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International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking: enhanced co-operation between Europe and the countries of the Mediterranean basin on 26 June

Statement by Secretary General Terry Davis

Strasbourg, 25.06.2009 - "Drugs know no frontiers. They are an international problem. It follows that international co-operation and the exchange of information is an essential precondition for effective action to meet the challenges resulting from addiction to illicit drugs and even to lawful substances like alcohol and tobacco," said Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

The Council of Europe partial agreement on the fight against drug abuse and drug trafficking, known as the Pompidou Group, has recently extended its activities to countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia can now benefit from Council of Europe training and assistance programmes. Lebanon has also joined us, and other countries in Africa and the Middle East are expected to join very soon. Our programmes are designed to help the introduction of effective policies to tackle drug abuse, and these programmes take account of cultural factors and ensure better treatment for drug addicts" said the Secretary General.

For the past 30 years the Pompidou Group has been working as a part of the Council of Europe to bring together all those involved in combating drug abuse and trafficking and encourage them to co-operate, engage in dialogue and share information, experience and examples of good practice.

The general objective is to reconcile practice and policy challenges, with the benefit of knowledge acquired through research, in order to come up with drug policies that are more effective on the ground.

Created by seven European countries in 1971 and incorporated into the Council of Europe in 1980, the Pompidou Group now has 35 member states.

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