

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON NARCOTIC DRUGS**

Thursday, 16 March 2006

Present:

Members: R. Benesch (Sorooptimist International), rbenesch@utanet.at
F. Berger (International Police Association), franz.berger@ipa.at
E. Carlin (Mentor Foundation), ec@mentoruk.org
E. Efthimiou-Mordaunt (John Mordaunt Trust),
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E. Frei (Salvation Army), NGO@swi.salvationarmy.org
S. Gfundner (Zonta International), Sylvia.gfundner@chello.at
L. Gundacker (WFWPI), lilly.austria@flashbox.at
E. Hauer-Rona (ICW). boefv.ncwaustralia@utanet.at
H. Kaschitz (Sorooptimist International ECE Liaison),
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G. Köcher, IFUW
T. Legl (1st Vice-Chairman), (ICAA, Euro-TC), thomas.legl@gmx.at
Dr. B. Nassirimanesh (Persepolis NGO), bijan@ahrn.net
M. Parenzan (IFBPW), marlene.parenzan@chello.at
M. Perron (2nd Vice-Chair) (Canadian Centre on Substance
Abuse), mperron@ccsa.ca
Dr. F. Poldrugo (ISAM), polydrug@units.it
E. Pomberger (Pax Romana, ICMICA-IMCS)
R. Spalt (CeIS), rosetta.spalt@gmx.at
E. von Wartburg (ICAA), esther.wartburg@aon.at
B. Walsberger (European Union of Women), barfrina@utanet.at
F. Zeidler (Rotary International), f.zeidler@aon.at

UNODC: M. Dummar Frahi, mirella.frahi@unodc.org
G. Babbar, gautam.babbar@unodc.org

Guests: M. Barzanti (San Patrignano Foundation),
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M. Finnerty (Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission),
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G. Jeremiah (Daytop, NY), gjeremiah@daytop.org
M. Luppi (San Patrignano Foundation), mluppi@sanpatrignano.org
M. Riehl (WFWPI), maria@riehl.at

Regrets: F. Gehart, Vice-President CONGO, friedrich.gehart@gmx.net
I. Luxon (IFUW)
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E. Tongue (Chairperson) (IFUW), atongue@worldcom.ch

Agenda

1. Approval of the agenda
2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 13 January 2006
3. NGO Forum 2006
 - i. Report and statement to thematic debate
 - ii. Objective of future annual forums
4. Commission on Narcotic Drugs, 2006
 - i. NGO Committee's statement
 - ii. Resolution on NGOs
5. Fourth International NGO Forum
 - i. Report by M. Perron
 - ii. Resolution on finances and reporting
6. International Day Against Drug Abuse (26 June)
7. Committee communications
8. Any other business
 - i. Objectives of NGO Committee
 - ii. Forthcoming meetings
 - iii. Other

T. Legl, First Vice-Chairperson, opened the meeting at 10.30 a.m. and welcomed all members and guests.

He informed the meeting that the husband of Eva Tongue (Chairperson) had passed away after spending two weeks in hospital. He paid tribute to Archer Tongue who had been Executive Director of the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions for many years and had been well known in the addiction field. He had opened the organization to many different aspects, including alcohol, narcotics, gambling and tobacco, and the Council had been a platform for a real exchange of ideas. He had been present at all our NGO Forums. We have lost a valuable personality and a pioneer in networking in the addiction field. The success of our Committee was due largely to Eva and her husband. The Committee was silent for one minute's remembrance.

As there were a number of guests and new members present, everyone at the meeting introduced themselves.

1. Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved without change.

2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 13 January 2006

The minutes of the last meeting were approved after correcting the email address of E. Carlin.

3. NGO Forum 2006

M. Jelsma reported that there had been difficulties in putting the programme together (copy attached) because the topic was not one with which most member organizations were familiar. UNODC had been very helpful in providing the names of possible speakers. Mr. Costa, Executive Director of UNODC, had given a lengthy talk in spite of having another engagement. The other speakers had given interesting presentations, particularly the Bolivian talking on behalf of coca leaf farmers. As he had spoken in Spanish, interpretation had been provided for the event, financed by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, for which the Committee thanked M. Perron.

The conference room had been quite full. The attendance list had been signed by 99 names, of which 23 were NGOs, 19 were from UNODC, 6 were journalists and the remainder were from governments or intergovernmental organizations. 109 letters of invitation had been sent to Permanent Missions to the UN, and the UN Information Service had sent out an invitation to those on its NGO mailing list.

While there had been good feedback from the Forum, many regretted the lack of time for discussions and felt that the chair should have insisted on a stricter time schedule. M. Perron, Second Vice-Chairman, thanked everyone involved in the preparations. M. Dummar Frahi requested that the report be prepared and circulated as soon as possible, together with the list of participants.

i. Report and statement to thematic debate

After the Forum, M. Jelsma had prepared an excellent statement (copy attached) which he had discussed with those Committee members present on Tuesday. As an accredited ECOSOC NGO representative, he had delivered it to the thematic debate on Tuesday afternoon on behalf of the NGO Committee. The statement with an NGO Committee header was distributed to the Commission on Friday.

E. Carlin criticized the fact that no draft statement had been prepared in advance and put before the Forum for approval. M. Perron said that as the purpose of this Forum was to have a voice to contribute to the thematic debate of the Commission and to provide an NGO platform to make recommendations and comments, the statement needed to flow from the discussions.

ii. Objective of future annual forums

The appropriateness of a whole-day meeting compared with a half-day meeting was discussed at length: a steady improvement in the quality had been achieved over the years, culminating in a full-day meeting; short intense events attract more persons; more speakers involve more expense; more Committee members must become involved in providing speakers.

A full-day meeting on two different topics which included the thematic debate and a second theme, was felt to be confusing. Also, if the thematic debate was held on the second day of the Commission, it would not be convenient to hold a full-day meeting on the first day of the Commission when delegations were arriving and attending the opening. It was agreed to consider holding a half-day event in connection with the thematic debate and a second half-day meeting later in the week in the form of a training meeting with handouts on procedures for newer NGO representatives. M. Parenzan and M. Dummar Frahi were asked to prepare a draft paper on procedures, for circulation to the Committee for comments and to obtain further questions needing clarification. Another possibility for a half-day Forum would be to present preparatory work carried out in connection with the International Forum

M. Dummar Frahi was requested to inform the Committee as soon as the topic of the thematic debate of the 2007 Commission was known. A Programme Committee would be set up, working via email so that members not resident in Austria could participate. As Governments decide on this topic, NGOs could only provide influence through government representatives. All possibilities of publicising the programme for the Forums would be considered, including consulting at an early date with the UN Information Service and using the websites of member organizations.

4. Commission on Narcotic Drugs 2006

i. NGO Committee's statement

It had been intended to prepare a statement to the plenary of the Commission. However, as a statement had already been delivered to the thematic debate, it was decided not to prepare a further statement.

ii. Resolution on NGOs

M. Perron had drafted a resolution to be tabled by the Canadian Delegation to the Commission concerning cooperation with NGOs. This resolution had been approved by the Committee of the Whole sponsored by Canada, Norway, Philippines and Ukraine after a few changes which had also deleted the name of the Vienna NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs (copy will be sent when available from UNOCD). However, the content as drafted by M. Perron had been largely accepted.

5. Fourth International NGO Forum

i. Report by M. Perron

The Fourth International Forum will take place at a date related to the Review of UNGASS, the date of which was to be decided by the Commission. At a meeting of the Organizing Committee in London in November 2005, three objectives for the Forum had been identified:

- to comment on NGO achievements connected with the seven UNGASS action plans;
- to discuss successful interfaces between governments, NGOs and the UN;
- review existing conventions.

The second meeting of this Organizing Committee would follow this meeting, at which a Steering Committee and a Programme Committee would be set up. Leaders would be assigned, and schedules, fund-raising and budget (currently set at €600,000) would be discussed. In the coming year, papers would be commissioned and a secretariat set up using existing seed money (€83,000) provided by the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, the Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse (CCSA) and The Senlis Council. T. Legl thanked the donors for their contributions. It was hoped that some NGO Committee member organizations might also donate funds.

The results of the London meeting had been endorsed by the Executive Committee of UNODC. The current session of the Commission had received a conference room paper (copy attached) in which the International Forum had been mentioned as well as Monday's Forum.

ii. Resolution on finances and reporting

The Committee agreed to M. Perron's proposal that a separate bank sub-account be established in Vienna for the funds received for the International Forum. He offered support by the Chief Finance Officer at CCSA to report on the use of the funds, as the whole procedure should be as transparent as possible. He also proposed that the NGO Committee set up a website for papers and statements.

6. International Day Against Drug Abuse (26 June)

The theme to be taken up by UNODC in 2006 was likely to be "Children and drugs", also as victims of traffickers. The NGO Committee had been requested for suggestions of themes but as this request had come rather late, we were not able to meet the deadline. It was pointed out that the ideas suggested for a previous International Day would be relevant for the current topic which remains valid for a whole year. Members should bring further proposals for Committee involvement to our next meeting. F. Poldrugo said that his organization worked on how to involve the family in prevention and addiction treatment.

We will put the International Day 2007 on our agenda later this year to try to come up on time with an idea to put to UNODC.

7. Committee communications

With very few exceptions, the members of the NGO Committee have access to email but there is little reaction when ideas are requested. B. Nassirimanesh suggested that templates be used, writing down the whole task with all its

components and circulating it to the Committee for response. This idea was pursued under the next agenda item.

8. Any other business

i. Objectives of NGO Committee

M. Perron brought up the work plan for next year and who will do what. Emails are sent out but no replies received and he wondered whether we are getting through to the recipients. Preparing a template involves setting out four or five questions on a certain topic and asking: Can you help? Where? For example,

- Thematic debate) Who can contribute what?
- Training session) What is our capacity?
- International Day) Beyond membership?
- NGO Forum) Are you active in the media?

These questions would be sent to NGO Committee members by email. The replies would be passed on to the persons responsible for each topic and be discussed at the following Committee meeting.

ii Forthcoming meeting

It was agreed to meet on 10 May 2006 at 2.30 p.m. in the Press Briefing Room.

iii Other

G. Jeremiah is Vice-Chairman of the New York Committee. He would try to set up a line of communication between our two committees but the Chairman does not use a computer. The New York Committee meets on the last Thursday of every month except in summer. He was requested to make their minutes available to our Committee and to pass on our minutes which are copied to him, to the New York Committee.

As requested by the last meeting, B. Walsberger had met with G. Babbar of UNODC concerning his proposal that the Committee prepare a publication for the UNGASS Review. A number of ideas had been discussed, which she had passed on to M. Perron for the Steering Committee of the International Forum.

Also as discussed at the last meeting, she had written an official letter to the Commission secretariat requesting that a note be put in the daily Journal of the Commission informing NGO representatives in government delegations that they could meet with the NGO Committee in the NGO Lounge. This request has not been met. M. Dummar Frahi felt that it had been overlooked and not ignored!

Barbara Walsbrger
Secretary
Vienna NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs