

REPORT OF THE ENCOD GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2009 – CENTRE ESPLAI, BARCELONA SPAIN

Present were:

1. Hector Brotons, Alacannabis, Spain
2. Leonardo Esteve, Alacannabis, Spain
3. Myranda Bruin, Colosseum, Netherlands
4. Antonio Escobar, Enlace, Spain
5. Pedro Quesada, Enlace, Spain
6. Victor dos Santos, MDHG, Netherlands
7. Paulo Azkue Mayorga, PAOTXA, Spain
8. Mikkel, PAOTXA, Spain
9. Alessandra Viazzi, PIC, Italy
10. Enrico Fletzer, Radio K, Italy
11. Freek Polak, SDB, Netherlands
12. Kris Verdonck, TUP, Belgium
13. Ingrid Wunn, Hanf-Initiative, Germany
14. Michael Oehlenschlager, Hanf-Initiative, Germany
15. Marisa Felicissimo, Psicotropicus, Belgium
16. Farid Ghehioeche, CAM-RD, France
17. Iker Val, GANJAZZ, Spain
18. Enrique Valverde, Doble Zero, Spain
19. Miren Ugarte, Ai Laket, Spain
20. Iñaki, Faudas, Spain
21. Martin Barriuso, Pannagh, Spain
22. Jose, La Maca/FAC, Spain
23. Nora, La Maca/FAC, Spain
24. Eduard Casas, GASS, Spain
25. Jaime Prats, Cañamo, Spain
26. Xavier Pretel, Faudas/Asaupam, Spain
27. André Fürst, Chanvre-Info, Switzerland
28. Sylvia Weisskopf, Zum Hinkelstein, Switzerland
29. Virginia Montañes, individual member, Spain
30. Ana Pertika, individual member, Spain
31. Antonio Valenzuela, individual member, Spain
32. Bas Tielens, individual member, Belgium
33. Eduardo Lopez Arriero, individual member, Spain
34. Jan Ludewig, individual member, Germany
35. Jason Rice, individual member, United Kingdom
36. Joep Oomen, Secretariat, Belgium

Non members:

37. Alison Boston, Spain
38. Dana Beal, Cures not Wars, USA
39. Carlos Cortes, Austria

Represented:

40. Jorgen Kjaer, Brugerforeningen, Denmark (by Joep Oomen)
41. Christine Kluge, AKZEPT, Germany (by Joep Oomen)
42. Marina Impallomeni, Forum Droghe, Italy (by Joep Oomen)
43. Bruno Valkeneers, L.A., Belgium (by Fredrick Polak)

Excused: Jorge Roque, individual member, Portugal

1. Approval of the Annual Report 2008

The Annual Report 2008 was approved, the members of the Steering Committee were exempted of their responsibilities for the financial year 2008.

2. Conclusions of the Assembly

The conclusions were formulated in 4 working group sessions and 5 plenary sessions with translation. The 4 WG sessions were dedicated to the 4 main working areas of Encod: Organisation, Information, Lobby and Action.

Conclusions on Area 1: Organisation

1. Working groups

A proposal was approved to create five working groups on the 5 different tasks that have been identified as Encod's main areas of operation : Action, Information (with sub-area Internet), Lobby and Organisation. These groups will be coordinated by the four SC members and evt. people from outside the SC.

The SC members will initiate the working groups by asking Encod members in every country/language region to participate in a mailing list that will be created for the purpose of coordinating each working group.

2. Country/region representations

Secondly, the SC will ask Encod members to form "Encod-representations" per country/language region that unite the members from that region who work in each of the five areas.

The country/region representations can also carry out strategies to obtain financing for their own activities, but they should not depend on that (also they should be able to get money through the central coordination, adapted to national conditions)

National representations can install a second-level membership (10 euro) as a tool of this decentralised funding strategy.

3. Analyse the results of the Drugs and Diplomacy Research

The SC will study the results of the research that was made in Basque Country and see how they can be used to improve the structure proposal, adapting it to the reality of different members.

4. Role of outgoing SC members

The outgoing SC members will during a certain period be available to support the new SC members to support them

Conclusions on Area 2. Information

1. Manual on use of website and organigramme

A manual will be written on how to use the website, together with an inventory of resources on internet tools and instructions on how to use them. Like wise an organigram is needed of the Encod structure, that gives information on the people who are collaborating, their communication protocol, style norms etc.

2. Section on prisoners

A section could be created to help and support prisoners of the drugwar, and victims of human rights infringements. Testimonies could be collected in an annual report.

3. Facebook etc.

Encod presence on Facebook, Twitter etc. should be developed, these are especially helpful in cases of urgent or letter campaigns.

4. Hard paper edition of bulletin

Every few months a hard paper edition of the bulletin can be published, on a special theme, that can be distributed in shops, bars and places where activists come,, eventually combined with a “low entry membership” or fund-raising strategy.

5. Coordinated press strategy

National representations will be asked to facilitate a coordinated press strategy by making and maintaining data bases of journalists or contacts to alternative media

6. Discussion papers

Encod should regularly make discussion papers available on topics such as:

Alternative treatments with illegal drugs (cannabis, iboga, ayahuasca)

Models for regulation in the framework of evidence-based drug policy, after prohibition has ended

On the moral “high ground” attitude of authorities who maintain drug prohibition.

On the legal framework for CSC’s in every country (FAC from Spain can take the lead in this)

Other issues: Human Rights, Public Health, Gender, Culture and drug use

Conclusions on Area 3: Lobby

1. Direct contact

Encod and its members should establish direct personal contact to National MPs and MEPs, government officials as well as leading figures in the police and justice apparatus, if possible by alternative ways like Facebook and regularly put “nasty questions” on drug policy ,

Also they should use existing mechanisms like petitions or polls on the internet, get involved in national consultation or dialogue forums, where these exist.

2. Use Catania report

Encod should approach the new MEPs informing them on the Catania report as the summary of the main objectives for drug policy reform, and on the evaluation of March 2009 (the Reuter report), urging them to demand a modification of the current Action Plan.

3. Short lobby flyer

Encod should make a list of principles that can be put on a flyer, it could be a summary of the Catania report or the proposal of the French “cannabis sans frontieres” group, the manifesto of International Coalition of NGOs, 350 NGOs worldwide, in order to base a new coalition with other organisations such as INPUD, TNI/IDPC

These flyers can also be distributed to politicians, evt. with seeds, to make them see we exist, but in a way that they should react

4. Recommendation to members

For all members, to become active member of a political party or a political organization and spread our message.

5. Lobby at UN

With regards to the presence of Encod at the UN CND meeting in Vienna 2010: create a joint Lobby Media Group that prepare questions to the national delegates or UN personnel at next years CND 2010, and film their answers for TV reports on Internet (focus on the Reuter report)

6. Lobby at EU

With regards to the strategy for the EU CSF: if Encod is thrown out of this forum another Encod member may be invited for the next CSF session in January 2010: this means we need a common strategy, it should remain a strong one condemning the way that the European Union treats civil society dialogue, we should remain looking for allies inside the CSF

In the 26 June press release, we should confront the governments and EU with an attack on the undemocratic nature of their policies.

We should continue to approach the Horizontal Drug Group which are the EU Member States drug policy group (but not ask them anything, just depict them as what they are: a power control instrument)

7. Training events

Encod should organise training events on how EU and UN apparatus function, this can be repeated at national level as well.

Conclusions on Area 4: Action

1. In combination with lobby group:

The new SC should try to organize, with the help of friendly MEPs, a conference in the European Parliament, maybe in connection with CSF in 2010 on the issue of civil society participation

2. In combination with Information group

The new SC should cooperate more with international organisations in the scientific field (ibogaine, IACM), or find scientists who can (scientifically) evaluate which of our arguments are working and which are not.

3. In combination with the website group:

ENCOD should promote the creation of national and international webtv-broadcasts by its members. See <http://cannabissansfrontieres.video-blog.tv> as an example and for a free tool for publishing the videos. Also the HCLU could help with this.

4. Vienna 2010

We can organise one or more public events highlighting the Reuter report and promoting the legal use of all currently banned plants, with an emphasis on the coca leaf.

At the same time we can organise actions in other countries in run up towards the meeting in Vienna 2010 insisting that governments should take into account the Reuter report conclusions

At the office of the Fundamental Human Rights Agency in Vienna we can organise a symbolic action about cases of people suffering the drugs war.

5. Coca commercialisation

The purposes of the agreement on coca can be continued through a separate body, independent of Encod, for instance called Coca Social Club, that would be involved in the "commercial" aspects of the agreement.

6. Presence in events

Encod should try to guarantee its presence on local (and national) cultural events such as concerts, festivals etc. via flyers/posters with “the basics of drug policy”. The SC-member overseeing the action-working group should collect contact information of groups that are willing to represent ENCOD when they are present at such events and offer them promotion material etc for free.

7. Million Marijuana Marches, Cannabis Social Clubs

Encod could coordinate the MMMs in Europe, motivate members to organize at least some symbolic action on 1 or 8 May. Through the MMM's, the Cannabis Social Clubs can be promoted. We should try to find people who are willing to do national MMM coordination. On the long term, organize a European MMM to Brussels?

The Spanish FAC will support the actions on CSC model informing on the events it will organise in Spain and promise to write an Encod bulletin on the Cannabis Social Clubs informing on the legal framework in each country

8. Long term action

Organise workshops for (specially young) people to educate them about the big picture.

9. Short term action

On the 26th of June, in case Chakib is still not free: Present a letter to all Moroccan embassies in Europe demanding the release of Chakib. Same letter to every European embassy in Morocco. Write open letters, inform the media.

3. Election new Steering Committee

All but one members of the Encod Steering Committee 2007-2009 (Marina Impallomeni, Alessandra Viazzi, Alberto Sciolari, Jan Ludewig, André Fuerst, Virginia Montañes and Joep Oomen) stepped down, they were thanked for their efforts.

The remaining SC member, Frederick Polak, postulated as a candidate for the new Encod Steering Committee 2009 – 2011. Other candidates were Antonio Escobar Ruiz (Enlace, Spain), Jorge Roque (individual member, Portugal) and Marisa Felicissimo (Psicotropicus, Belgium)

43 members participated in the election, which gave following results:

Jorge Roque: 8 votes
Marisa Felicissimo: 9 votes
Antonio Escobar Ruiz: 13 votes
Frederick Polak: 13 votes

As a result all 4 candidates were elected in the Steering Committee.

The new SC will have its first meeting on Friday 2 and Saturday 3 October 2009 in Antwerpen.

4. Next General Assembly

The next General Assembly will be held on either 18, 19 and 20 June or 25, 26 and 27 June, possibly in Frankfurt.