



**Ministerial Meeting of the Sectoral Group on the Misuse of Drugs  
20<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

*Communiqué*

Mr Alan Campbell M.P, the UK Government's Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Crime Reduction, today hosted a Ministerial meeting of the British-Irish Council on the Misuse of Drugs at the Home Office headquarters in London. The meeting was chaired by Mr. John Curran T.D., Ireland's Minister of State with responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy in the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The meeting focussed on how to effectively Engage with Communities around Drug Misuse.

The meeting provided a good opportunity to focus in detail on this specific subject thus facilitating detailed discussions and exchange of experiences and best practices in this respect. The Ministers agreed that engaging communities and developing community-based responses has a significant contribution to make in dealing with the issue of problem drug use in society.

The Ministers found that, while their respective administrations are developing their own approaches for engaging with communities, they were of the view that the sharing of experiences provided a good opportunity to learn from each other. They also noted the increased focus of civil society's involvement in drugs issues at EU level.

The Ministers resolved to continue to co-operate and exchange experiences, with particular emphasis on initiatives that have led to successful outcomes and that may lend themselves to broader application in other administrations.

The British-Irish Council was established under the Strand Three Provisions of the Good Friday Agreement as a forum for its Members to exchange information, discuss, consult and use best endeavours to reach agreement on co-operation on matters of mutual interest within the competence of relevant Member Administrations. Ireland is the lead administration within the Council on the issue of Misuse of Drugs.

*The Irish Government was represented by the Minister of State with responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy, Mr. John Curran T.D., who chaired the meeting. The British Government was represented by Mr. Alan Campbell M.P., the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Home Office, who hosted the meeting. Guernsey was represented by Deputy Hunter Adam, Minister, Health and Social Services Department, and Jersey by Senator Ben Shenton, Minister for Health and Social Services. The Isle of Man was represented by the Minister for Home Affairs Mr Adrian Earnshaw MHK. The Welsh Assembly Government was represented by Mr John Lenaghan, Head of Substance Misuse Policy Development Team, Community Safety Division, Welsh Assembly Government. Mr Joe Griffin, Head of Drugs Policy Unit, represented the Scottish Government. A full list of delegation members is attached.*

The Ministers reviewed the successful work carried out by the Council during 2008 and focused on these important areas:

- Ireland hosted the eleventh BIC Summit when the topic of “Families and Drugs Misuse – Challenges and Opportunities” was discussed;
- Northern Ireland hosted an expert seminar presented by Professor J David Hawkins, (based in Seattle) on the topic of “Using Advances in Prevention Science to Guide Substance Misuse Prevention in Communities”, and
- Jersey hosted a meeting which focused on the effective “Engagement of Young People with Substance Misuse”.

The Ministers agreed that these meetings had provided a very useful forum for sharing, in a focussed and practical manner, the detailed expertise and knowledge, which is held across the British-Irish Council region. It was also noted that, in addition to exploring specific themes in depth, each meeting had facilitated the exchange of information on general developments and initiatives in relation to the misuse of drugs.

The Ministers agreed that work in 2009 would focus on the following areas:

- Guernsey will host a meeting on Prisons - Substance Issues;
- Ireland will host a meeting on Drug Deaths Indices;
- Scotland will host a meeting, though the topic for discussion is yet to be finalised, and
- Isle of Man will host the next Ministerial Meeting.

These meetings will also seek to strengthen and consolidate the ongoing co-operation and the exchange of information, experience and best practice between Members.

It was agreed that Ministers would meet again in late 2009.

**British-Irish Council (Misuse of Drugs Sectoral Group)**

**20<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

## List of Delegates

<b>Irish Government</b>	
Minister of State with responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy	Mr. John Curran T.D
Principal Officer, Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs	Mr. Michael Conroy
Assistant Principal Officer, Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs	Mr. Eddie Arthurs
Higher Executive Officer, Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs	Ms. Linda O'Rourke
Private Secretary to Minister of State Mr John Curran T.D	Mr. Alan Kelly
<b>UK Government</b>	
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Crime Reduction	Mr. Alan Campbell MP
Head of Drug Strategy Directorate, Home Office	Mr. Ian Martin
Head of Drug Strategy Delivery, Home Office	Mr. Owen Rowland
Drug Strategy Delivery Team, Home Office	Ms. Pamela Spalding
Head of Drugs Section, International Directorate, Home Office	Mr. Gabriel Denvir
Drugs Section, International Directorate, Home Office	Mr. James Marmion
Assistant Private Secretary to Mr. Campbell	Mr. Owen Noakes
<b>Guernsey</b>	
Minister, Health and Social Services Department, States of Guernsey	Mr. Hunter Adam
Director of Services for Children and Young People, Health and Social Services Department, States of Guernsey	Ms. Jacqui Gallienne
Drug and Alcohol Strategy Co-ordinator, States of Guernsey	Ms. Andrea Nightingale
<b>Jersey</b>	
Minister of Health and Social Services of the States of Jersey	Senator Ben Shenton
Department of Health and Social Services	Mr. Michael Gafoor
<b>Government of the Isle of Man</b>	
Minister for Home Affairs	Mr. Adrian Earnshaw MHK
Drug and Alcohol Co-ordinator	Ms. Margaret O'Reilly
<b>Welsh Assembly Government</b>	
Head of Substance Misuse Policy Development Team, Community Safety Division, Welsh Assembly Government	Mr. John Lenaghan
<b>Scottish Government</b>	
Head of the Drugs Policy Unit, Scottish Government	Mr. Joe Griffin