29 June 2017

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**Twelfth Meeting of Heads of National
Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Europe**
Vienna, 27-30 June 2017

Draft report

Rapporteur: Kris Lapiere (Belgium)

Consideration of topics by working groups

Issue (a): Use of the Internet for drug-related activities

1.   The working group held one meeting on 28 June. In its consideration of the topic under review, the working group made the following observations:

(a)   Cybercrime is developing into a service industry where IT contractors are selling their services to criminal groups to facilitate the development of illegal businesses;

(b)   More awareness is needed among law enforcement officers and agencies of what constitutes a cybercrime and how they may be carried out;

(c)   The darknet is an engine that drives illicit trafficking activities through a collection of thousands of loosely connected websites, a factor that contributes to the strength of its security and the anonymity it affords its users;

(d)   Much of the information needed to successfully investigate cyber trafficking offences and identify the individuals behind them is kept in the records of the private sector operators of the Internet service providers;

(e)   The International Narcotics Control Board actively promotes the awareness of the need for suitable controls over the Internet sale of pharmaceutical preparations.

2.   The working group drew up the following conclusions:

(a)   Gathering evidence of cyber offences requires specialist knowledge, training and skills;

(b)   Law enforcement agencies should adopt proactive strategies to undermine and dissuade the use of the darknet;

(c)   Private companies are often concerned about their reputations and do not want flaws or failures in their IT systems exposed to public scrutiny, making the

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gathering of information, related records and evidence in the investigation of cyber-related offences difficult;

(d) The TOR software that enables anonymous communication on the Internet through routing messages through multiple Internet service providers (ISP's) in multiple jurisdictions creates a challenge to investigators seeking to gather evidence or share the information of investigations into online cyber offences.

3. The working group adopted the following recommendations:

(a) Governments should be encouraged to ensure that their law enforcement agencies are well informed, professionally trained and suitably resourced so as to be effective in the investigation of cyber offences and the related use of the Internet for illicit trafficking;

(b) Governments must work together to overcome the obstacles encountered undertaking the investigation of cyber-related trafficking offences across multiple jurisdictions and introduce the necessary changes needed in legislation, practices and procedure to expedite information-sharing, enquiries with Internet service providers and the transfer of evidence;

(c) Governments should encourage their law enforcement agencies to develop the specialist skills that will support the investigation of cyber-related offences and lead to successful criminal prosecutions.

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