

## **Hemp associations from all over the world join forces and speak out: industrial hemp is an agricultural product, not a drug**

*Brussels – Prior to the UN vote in December and in the midst of a puzzling and unfair situation concerning the legal status of Cannabis sativa L. in Europe, but also in most parts of the globe, the world's largest hemp associations<sup>1</sup> have issued a common firm statement that aims at shedding light on the discussion about industrial hemp versus drug cannabis.*

The [joint position paper](#) is based on two international legal instruments: the Single Convention of 1961 (C61), amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances (C71). The Convention was ratified almost 60 years ago by 180 states and it still determines today's national drug control legislations worldwide.

It is worth recalling that the Convention only applies to cannabis varieties containing high levels of the psychotropic substance THC. Hence, a clear distinction is made between drug-type cannabis varieties, i.e. cannabis for adult use or medical purposes – that fall under the scope of the treaties – and Industrial hemp varieties, that are characterised by their low THC content. The latter is farmed for commercial purposes (cosmetics, food and feed, construction materials, etc.) and cannot lead to abuse nor dependence. Therefore, it can be inferred that **industrial hemp is clearly exempted from the scope of the treaties and that its downstream products and derivatives are not and have never been listed in the Schedules** of these Conventions – where narcotic drugs are registered.

Nevertheless, the recent preliminary conclusion made by the European Commission, by which extracts from industrial hemp varieties of Cannabis sativa L. are being considered as narcotics, prompts the need to **collectively demand scientifically-based and transparent policies** that will enable the flourishing of the European hemp sector, instead of causing its death. Moreover, killing the EU hemp sector would not prevent CBD and other hemp-derived products from being sold in our market, but would only serve to cross out the European sector from the trade game board.

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<sup>1</sup> Signatory organisations and associations of the industrial hemp sector:

- = ACU Asia-Pacific CBD Union
- = Australian Hemp Council
- = BHA British Hemp Alliance
- = CHTA/ACCC Canadian Hemp Trade Alliance/Alliance Commerciale Canadienne du Chanvre
- = EIHA European Industrial Hemp Association
- = HIHA Hokkaido JP. Industrial Hemp Association
- = LAIHA Latin America Industrial Hemp Association
- = Mongolian Hemp Association
- = NHA National Hemp Association
- = NZHIA New Zealand Hemp Industries Association

"Anyone who reads our rationale without prejudice will see that industrial hemp is a valuable and multi-purpose agricultural plant", EIHA Managing Director, Lorenza Romanese, says. **"Having a botanical link to drug cannabis cannot and must not sentence an entire hemp industry to death.** I can only urge authorities to read our position paper and take action. "

Therefore, the aim of this position paper is to establish, together with international and national regulatory authorities, a **transparent set of rules for the industrial hemp sector in order to harness the enormous economic, environmental and nutritional benefits of hemp.** Achieving a whole-plant approach by being able to farm and market all parts of the plant would have a truly positive impact on agriculture, the environment, the economy, consumers' health and well-being, and, of course, the whole hemp industry.

"It is time that our industry can finally grow, produce and sell according to internationally valid regulations – without constantly encountering new and major obstacles", says Daniel Kruse, President of the European Industrial Hemp Association (EIHA). "Our line of arguments is clear: **the cultivation of all parts of the hemp plant for industrial purposes is legal.** The Single Convention only deals with the illicit farming and trafficking of high-THC cannabis and cannabis resin, not with low-THC cannabis used for commercial purposes".

**Note to editors:**

The **European Industrial Hemp Association (EIHA)** represents the common interests of hemp farmers, producers and traders working with hemp fibres, shives, seeds, leaves and cannabinoids. Our main task is to serve, protect and represent the hemp sector in the EU and international policy-making.

EIHA covers different areas for the application of hemp, namely its use for **construction** materials, **textiles**, **cosmetics**, **feed**, **food** and **supplements**.

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