



Working document No 2

Informal Meeting of the Ministers of the Interior on the Future of Europol and EU Law Enforcement Cooperation

1 October 2009 in the Hague, Netherlands

Joining forces for the operational implementation of the EU Law Enforcement Priorities

1. The objective of this paper is to suggest measures for improved cooperation between the EU agencies. Europol, Frontex, Eurojust and Ceuol all contribute in various ways in the EU's effort to prevent, detect, investigate and prosecute serious crime. Although their mandate is different and their capacity is built on different types of expertise, large parts of their objectives coincide. Therefore, carrying out their respective tasks and fulfilling the needs of an effective implementation of EU priorities to prevent and combat serious crime requires substantive operative cooperation, as well as political coordination.

2. Much work has already been undertaken to achieve this. EU adopts working priorities set by the Council and on the basis of OCTA. These are increasingly reflected in national priorities by the Member States authorities as well as in the activities carried out by Europol, Eurojust, Frontex and Ceuol. The Community makes available a substantial budget to fund numerous initiatives across the EU through the financial programmes. The Police Chiefs Task Force runs the so-called "COSPOL Projects", with the support of Europol. The Customs Cooperation Working Party elaborates several Action Plans, projects and operations. Europol and Eurojust provide active support to the establishment of Joint Investigation Teams and other operational activities between the Member States. Ceuol is continuously adapting its courses to new topics identified by the Council. Frontex coordinates the operational cooperation of border management. At the informal meeting, some of the Agencies will be asked to give practical examples of their involvement in operations.



3. Additional progress can still be made in many ways. The EU agencies and bodies should guarantee that none of their activities overlap and that focus is put on the business needs. Cross-border investigations, with the support of Europol and Eurojust, should become routine for an increasing number of investigators in the Member States. The EU working priorities should better guide the national planning cycles, and not remain a paper exercise. Better awareness and greater flexibility should exist for the funding possibilities at EU level. As a consequence, improved training of law enforcement officers is likely to play a significant role in the future.

4. A suggested way forward could be that the Agencies, under the responsibility of the Presidency, jointly discuss possible measures for improved cooperation. Such discussions should take into account any future change of the institutional framework. The Agencies should then report back to the Council on suggested measures on how to improve the cooperation between the Agencies. Some of these measures may involve shared responsibility with the Member States.

5. Not only could such a unified approach strengthen the possibility to prevent, detect and investigate organised crime, but it could also ensure a more efficient allocation of resources.

6. Against this background, the Presidency invites the Ministers to address the following questions:

- How can the Agencies provide better support for the operational activities at EU and national level?
- How can the Agencies and the Member States better ensure that their operational activities do not overlap?
- Do the Ministers support the idea of a report on proposals for improved inter agency cooperation? If yes, what could be suggested topics to be addressed in such a report?

