

Joint EU-US statement following the EU-US Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Meeting

On 19 June 2019 the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union hosted the EU-U.S. Ministerial Meeting on Justice and Home Affairs in Bucharest, Romania. The meeting provided an opportunity for both sides to take stock of their long-standing cooperation in this area and to reaffirm their partnership in addressing common security threats.

The United States was represented by the U.S. Attorney General, William Barr, and Acting Deputy Secretary for Homeland Security, David Pekoske.

The European Union, hosting the meeting, was represented by the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos, the Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality Věra Jourová, the Commissioner for the Security Union Julian King, as well as the Romanian Vice Prime Minister *ad interim* and Minister of Justice Ana Birchall and the Minister of Interior Carmen Daniela Dan, together with the Finnish Minister of the Interior Ms. Maria Ohisalo and the Minister of Justice Ms. Anna-Maja Henriksson, on behalf of the current and incoming Presidencies of the Council of the European Union.

The European Union and the United States reaffirmed that fighting terrorism is among their top priorities and committed to enhance their joint efforts, including by expanding the sharing of information gathered in zones of combat for use in investigations and prosecutions. Participants welcomed results already achieved in this domain, including in cooperation with Europol and Eurojust, and looked forward to the outcome of the meeting to be held on this subject that will bring together EU and US experts in Brussels on 10 July. With regard to other critical areas of EU-U.S. information sharing, Participants of the meeting reiterated the importance of the EU-U.S. Passenger Name Record agreement and committed to begin a joint evaluation to assess its implementation. The European Union and the United States also discussed current threats to aviation security, including unmanned aircraft systems; combatting the use of the internet for terrorist purposes; and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats.

The European Union and the United States also discussed the priority area of security in cyberspace. Participants committed to further joint efforts to maintain a safe, open, and secure cyberspace, and exchanged views on how to best address growing cyber threats. Participants recognised that the deployment of 5G network infrastructure needs to be addressed as a matter of priority, as it might pose significant security risks and impact the ability of law enforcement agencies to take effective action against crime. The European Union and the United States committed to further pursue their exchanges on assessing and managing 5G and supply chain security risks through existing channels, including the Justice and Home Affairs meetings.

The European Union and the United States also recognised the importance of swift cross-border access to electronic evidence, and discussed the implications of recent legislation enacted in the United States and legislation under examination in the European Union. Participants acknowledged the recent approval by the Council of the European Union of a mandate authorising the Commission to negotiate on behalf of the EU an agreement with the United States facilitating access to e-evidence for the purpose of judicial cooperation in criminal matters, as well as the steps being taken by the United States towards opening negotiations of such an agreement, in a manner consistent with their respective legislations.

The European Union and the United States also reviewed the unprecedented challenges faced by electoral systems in democratic states, which call for exchanges of best practices to overcome those challenges. Participants confirmed their commitment to further discuss an expert level dialogue.

The United States and the European Union briefed each other on recent developments in their migration and border management policies; in particular, the European Union provided information on the reinforced mandate of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (EBCGA) and on the implementation of the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS), two instruments which will further strengthen the EU's border management. Both sides concurred on the vital importance of preventing and combatting migrant smuggling and trafficking of human beings and discussed further joint work in these areas.

Finally, the European Union and the United States agreed on the importance of advancing further towards reciprocal visa free

travel under their respective legal frameworks and, following the May 2019 meeting on visa reciprocity between the United States, the European Union and the concerned Member States, welcomed the progress of the five concerned Member States towards meeting the requirements of the Visa Waiver Program, in order to be considered for designation in the programme.

Reaffirming their commitment to advance together towards common solutions in these areas, the European Union and the United States committed to meet again in the second half of 2019 in Washington, D.C.

The meeting was also attended by the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator Gilles de Kerchove, the Executive Director of Europol Catherine De Bolle, the Executive Director of Frontex Fabrice Leggeri and the Vice-President of Eurojust Klaus Meyer-Cabri.

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