



Hamburg Declaration

of the Coalition of European countries against serious and organised crime

7 May 2024

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The ministers responsible for justice and security of the **Kingdom of Belgium**, the **Republic of France**, the **Federal Republic of Germany**, the **Republic of Italy**, the **Kingdom of the Netherlands** and the **Kingdom of Spain**, declare the following:

Considering the increasing threat on the values and functioning of our society posed by serious and organised crime, in particular illicit drugs trafficking, as one of the most significant and dynamic security threats today;

Recognizing that the societies in Latin America and the Caribbean are deeply affected by transnational organised crime related to the illegal narcotics trade, in particular cocaine, and are crucial partners in finding long term solutions;

Welcoming the participation of representatives from different countries of Latin America, which face the same security challenges and concerns, to jointly discuss bilateral and multilateral ways to improve cooperation in the fight against drug-related crime, notably in relation with the CLASI. Born out of the EU program EL PACCTO, the CLASI aims to consolidate the strategic and political dimension in the Latin American and Caribbean region to fight transnational organised crime. The CLASI, whose mandate extends to the Caribbean and covers drug trafficking, will be an important partner to steer the synergies created by EU programs;

Building on the joint declarations of ministers from the 7th of October 2022 and the 5th of June 2023; providing both impetus and input for future EU Presidencies and the European Commission to build a comprehensive EU approach against serious and organised crime;

Taking into account the existing legal frameworks, as well as established coordination processes and mechanisms for international and EU cooperation which are relevant in the fight against serious and organised crime, in particular agencies such as Eurojust, Europol, and the EMCDDA (future EU Drug Agency) as well as other mechanisms and programs for international and EU cooperation, such as MAOC-N, the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) and the actions set out in the European Commission's „EU Roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime“; and in particular the launch of the „European Ports Alliance“ to increase the resilience of ports against criminal infiltration by reinforcing the work of customs authorities, law enforcement, public and private actors in the ports across the EU;

Expressing full support for the overall aim of the „EU Roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime“ to scale up the response from governments, law enforcement, and private actors in key sectors by a collective and coordinated approach; which is taking on board the endeavours of the coalition of six European Countries against serious and organised crime and setting out to take their work to a next level and to intensify EU efforts;

Recognizing the efforts of the Swedish and Spanish EU Council Presidencies in putting the common EU approach against organised drug related crime on the political agenda;

Welcoming the focus and the priorities for combating organised crime set by the current Belgian EU Council Presidency;

which have a pernicious impact on European society as a whole, and which require joint efforts for their eradication;

Recognizing the need not to forget that there are other threats related to drug production and trafficking driven by transnational organized crime, in particular the illicit production and trafficking of other drugs,

Building upon our joined work to execute the Multi-annual Action Plan of 2022-2025 of the coalition in the light of the „EU Roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime,“ the coalition will focus its efforts on three main areas of concern:

I. Upstream disruption to prevent drugs from leaving the source- and transit countries by cooperating with our partners in the Latin American and Caribbean region to transnational organised crime;

II. Making our EU logistical hubs more resilient to prevent the drugs from entering our sea- and airports, taking the whole supply chain into account;

III. Dismantling international criminal networks by disrupting the criminal money flows and using all available tools in the toolbox;

Calling upon the current and future Commissioners for Justice and Home Affairs, in close cooperation with all relevant domains within the Commission, like DG TAXUD and DG Move, to continue to make the implementation of the following measures their priority within the framework of the Roadmap and in the future legislative period of 2024-2029:

I. International cooperation with source and transit countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) (upstream disruption):

1. Preventing drugs from leaving source- and transit countries in the LAC region, through the abuse of their logistical hubs, for instance by targeted dissemination of information about cargoes that have been identified as suspicious in South American ports and providing assistance in better securing their ports;
2. In the spirit of an integrated approach on all levels, making efforts to improve the security component when allocating development and environmental protection funds in the countries of origin;
3. Using existing structures for cooperation like AMERIPOL and EL PACCTO 2.0 to shape and strengthen our cooperation, based on mutual trust;
4. Building on the overview of liaison officers in the Latin American and Western Balkan regions made by the six coalition members to foster closer cooperation between member states in those regions of interest;

5. Improving the resilience of institutions and societies to transnational organised crime by using existing cooperation programs like EL PACCTO and COPOLAD;
6. Combining operational and institutional cooperation with an approach to tackle root causes of transnational organised crime, e.g. by offering sustainable economic alternatives to vulnerable members of societies;

II. Strengthening of logistical hubs

7. Making the link between the structures of the “European Ports Alliance” and the current and future activities of the Coalition and the national structures of the member states. For the success of this common effort and cooperation with public and private parties, the members of the Coalition consider it important to avoid duplication and redundancy with other formats and existing mechanisms, given the large number of ongoing initiatives at EU level and within the framework of the Coalition, and to respect the existing member state responsibilities. Wherever it is possible, the EU level should make use of existing structures;
8. Combating drug-related crime along the entire supply chain, from the countries of origin to the consumers by investing in public-private cooperation with relevant stakeholders in the supply chain;
9. Also, deepening the cooperation of customs authorities, law enforcement, public and private actors in the ports across the EU with the aim of a supply chain alliance, including a strong cooperation with shipping companies and terminals;
10. Avoiding and monitoring so called „waterbed effects“ in both EU and the LAC region as a result of increased security efforts in individual ports by a common security approach, including a regional approach on strengthening the resilience of the logistical hubs against criminal infiltration and abuse – in particular against corruption and cargo security risks;
11. Exploring ways to improve the existing international binding guidelines for ports such as the current ISPS code
12. and Performing EU evaluations in source and transit-countries on a port facility level, executed by the European Commission;

III. Dismantling high risk criminal networks

13. Further following up on Europol’s report on “Decoding the EU’s most threatening criminal networks” by exploiting the unique data set gathered by Europol in this context to continue dismantling high-risk criminal networks active in both EU countries and the LAC region;

14. Jointly exploring the ability of authorities to exchange cross-border information with regarding the administrative approach;
15. Focusing on criminal underground banking networks that enable worldwide drugs smuggling;
16. Improving the ability of EU and LAC authorities to trace, seize and confiscate virtual assets;
17. Preserving the ability to gain lawful access to encrypted criminal communications where this is necessary and proportionate for the purpose of preventing, investigating or prosecuting serious and organised crime;
18. Working on improving the exchange of information between prisons in the EU, in order to follow up on the findings of Europol's report on the most threatening criminal networks;
19. Continuing to make proposals, when and where appropriate, to find a harmonized and proportionate legislative framework that passes the test of subsidiarity offers real and pragmatic solutions to a criminal phenomenon that has increased its capacity and aggressiveness in recent years;
20. Explore new solutions from an administrative approach, such as the regulation of high-speed vessels commonly used to smuggle drugs into Europe, and reinforced administrative control of materials needed to facilitate the illicit transport or production of drugs;
21. Strengthening the exchange of information and cooperation between judicial authorities on cross-border investigations into organised crime, in particular drug trafficking cases, by setting up a network of specialised prosecutors and judges from Member States, anchored at Eurojust.