

STATEMENT

New European Agenda on Security, focus on EU value-added

European police staff organisations and unions welcome European Commission Agenda on Security and call on Commission to ensure proper implementation of its security goals.

BRUSSELS, 6 May 2014 – On 28 April, the European Commission presented its new European Agenda on Security. The Agenda addresses Member States' cooperation in tackling security threats and steps up common efforts in the fight against terrorism, organised crime and cybercrime for the coming five years (2015-2020). Representing more than 500,000 police officers from staff organisations and unions, the European Confederation of Police Unions (EuroCOP) welcomes the clear call from the Commission to make better use of existing tools and agencies to fight crime and terrorism and for the EU's Member States to enhance cooperation and share more information.

Anna Nellberg, President of EuroCOP said: "I am pleased to see that the Commission intends to further exploit existing tools to fight crime. I agree with the Commission that various information exchange tools, such as the Prüm framework, are yet to be used to their full potential. From an operational perspective, I think it is of utmost importance that these concerns are addressed if we are to enhance European law enforcement capacity for cooperation. For example, data currently needs to be entered into three different databases. As you can imagine, due to the limited resources both in terms of staff and technology, solving national crimes will come first".

In addition to the importance of information exchange and operational cooperation, the Commission rightly emphasises that the effectiveness of cooperation tools relies on law enforcement officers in Member States knowing how to use them. Training is indeed essential to allow authorities on the ground to exploit the tools in an operational situation. EuroCOP is convinced that training at EU level contributes to enhancing and approximating the quality and standards of law enforcement. The European police college CEPOL organizes courses, defines common curricula on cross-border cooperation and coordinates exchange programs. As police officers experience the international dimension of crime on a day to day basis, they should be better aware of international cooperative efforts to prevent and resolve it. **EuroCOP therefore believes it is essential that officials of all ranks benefit from European training programs and welcomes the Commission's statements that national police academies should use EU funding to make cross-border cooperation an integral part of their own training and practical exercises.**

Ongoing austerity measures continue to have a direct impact on police budgets. Lower police budgets means that there is less money available for the equipment police officers need and training opportunities have been reduced significantly. To protect our police officers on the street, it is vital that they have the skill sets to overcome the security challenges we face in Europe today. Anna Nellberg, President of EuroCOP said: "A discussion on funding and austerity measures at EU level is sensitive. However, we must acknowledge that the EU's open borders mean that decreases in Member States' internal security budgets have a knock-on effect on security within the wider region". **EuroCOP therefore welcomes the Commission's statement that the recently created Internal Security Fund should provide a responsive and flexible tool to address the most crucial challenges up to 2020, focussing on those areas where financial support will bring most value added.** EuroCOP believes that resources should be reallocated according to Member States' policing needs and it is important that European funding opportunities for national police forces are presented in a clear and comprehensible manner.

The new European Agenda on Security is essential to tackle security threats in the EU for the period 2015-2020 and ensuring that the progress made to date is not lost, but rather, built upon for the future. EuroCOP calls on the European Commission, Council and European Parliament to use the coming months to discuss the concrete actions for the EU and to ensure the Agenda's security goals are properly implemented.

The European Confederation of Police (EuroCOP) represents the interests of almost half a million police officers in 27 European countries, dealing with issues ranging from police cooperation across borders to a safer working environment for police officers on the street. EuroCOP was established in November 2002. It is an independent, non-profit and secular organisation and has no affiliation with any government or political party. It is self-financed through contributions of its members. EuroCOP is open to any organisation representing police officers in member countries of the European Union or the Council of Europe.

Annex:

- EuroCOP position on the new Internal Security Strategy
- EuroCOP Open Letter to EU policymakers

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