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to : Steering Group II

Subject: Relations with the United States of America

- Launching, in the first half of 1996, of a new transatlantic agenda and a joint action plan
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Relations with the United States of America
Launching, in the first half of 1996, of a new
transatlantic agenda and a joint action plan

On 3 December 1995, the Presidents of the Council of the European Union, of the Commission and of the United States signed a document on a new transatlantic agenda and a joint action plan between the European Union and the United States.

Part of the annexed programme deals with activities to be carried out in the field of Justice and Home Affairs.

As regards the activities falling within the competence of Steering Group II, it is deemed useful to make careful analyses, with a view to taking relevant initiatives.

1. Introduction

The setting up of a "transatlantic dialogue" to face the "challenges" which international crime poses to civil society everywhere is an opportunity to be seized in a timely and appropriate way.

The principle that some goals are closely related and technical operational measures against organized crime have to be taken jointly is fundamental for a structured dialogue with the US. It is therefore necessary to make a global assessment of the conclusions reached at the Madrid summit on 3 December 1995, starting from the pointers and results produced by the "Thematic Group" set up at the Berlin meeting on 12 July 1994.

Against this background Germany, the Commission and the United States examined a number

of proposals for closer cooperation in the fight against organized crime and drug trafficking.

The Group met on 2 December 1994 under the German Presidency and on 24 May 1995 under the French Presidency.

After a careful assessment, by member countries, of the crime analysis carried out by the United States (set out in Enfopol 160) and after each member country had declared its willingness to cooperate with the US and Canada in the fight against organized crime in all its aspects, at the end of the six month period the "Thematic Group" and member countries acknowledged that:

- it is useful to know the crime situations in the US and Canada and to have data on them;
- the information from EDU/Europol and from the Drugs Monitoring Centre is important;
- it is necessary to assess the cooperation achieved so far with the US and Canada, both at bilateral and at multilateral level;
- it is advisable not to set up further groups and to work with the aforementioned countries, as in the case of the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC), through the Working Party on Drugs and Organized Crime;
- it is advisable to study money laundering in more detail by resorting - as regards cooperation and related agreements - to the task force which is already operating within EDU/Europol.

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2. Priority goals

A full analysis of the aforementioned work programmes for transatlantic cooperation suggests that the foundations should be laid for a fruitful dialogue to work out measures against the most serious crimes on the following points:

- exchange of information on studies and analyses of emerging trends as regards international criminal activities;
- stepping up the fight against drugs, as well as against trafficking in chemicals and precursors used in drug production;
- joint support for training programmes worked out for police personnel from "associated" countries of Central and Eastern Europe and from Baltic countries;
- assessment of and response to the terrorist threat;
- exchange of experience in the technological and scientific fields.

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3. Specific initiatives in the fields falling within the competence of Steering Group II

In order to implement the aforementioned project in the framework of long-term action, the following initiatives could be started as priorities:

- A. A meeting at technical level between the Working Party on Drugs and Organized Crime and US experts; this should be extended to Canadian representatives and, starting

from the planning agreements drawn up at institutional level, the meeting should make it possible to carry out a first joint examination of the way in which transnational organized crime is developing by referring, in the first instance, to the analyses made by the US (Enfopol 160) and by EU member countries (Enfopol 108 Rev 2).

The meeting should be attended by EDU/Europol and should make it possible to examine common assessment standards for carrying out subsequent analyses.

Moreover, consideration could also be given to a protocol for the participation of EDU/Europol and of US police agencies in joint strategic analyses.

B. Studying in detail issues of common interest, including, in particular:

1. operational exchange of computerized intelligence;
2. information exchange and measures for mutual and timely access to cooperating witnesses;
3. improvement of extradition procedures;
4. neutralization of illegal proceeds by means of seizure and confiscation.

In order to fulfil the abovementioned task cooperation with Steering Group III would be useful.

C. The operational exchange of computerized intelligence should be included in the cooperation relations to be initiated in specific crime areas, starting with drug enforcement.

In response to the wish expressed by the US in Enfopol 160 to set up E-mail links between the United States and the European Union for information exchange, feasible

solutions could be explored. In this connection, if the US joined the Teldrug system and member countries adopted the proposal to resort to it for E-mail links, a computerized linking could be envisaged through this specific circuit, pending the setting up of the Europol computerized system.

- D. The United States should be involved by the fifteen in the cooperation process with Latin American countries, starting with those of the Andean area.

This initiative could start with the United States being involved in the dialogue which it is planned to hold with these countries at technical level during the six months of the Italian Presidency.

- E. Envisaging meetings in emergencies to exchange information on terrorism.
- F. Promoting the coordination of training carried out at "regional" police institutes such as the International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest, the Central and Eastern European Police Academy and the training institutes of the various member countries, not only by exchanging experts and observers, but also by harmonizing the latest teaching methods and curricula.

In this framework attention should be paid to the necessary connection between the aforementioned training initiatives and the plan resulting from the World Conference on Organized Crime (November 1994), concerning the setting up of an international training centre for law enforcement officers and judicial administrators.

G. Other measures

1. there should be more intensive cooperation between the United States and the European Union in the scientific and technological fields as regards the fight against organized crime. A first step in this direction could be made by organizing a meeting, at Troika level, with US authorities;
2. consultations could be developed between the European Union and the United States at international meetings focusing on "drugs" (for instance, the yearly meeting of the CND in Vienna).

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4. The Italian Presidency intends to promote the abovementioned initiatives by submitting this paper for examination by the Council of Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs.

At the same time, in close cooperation with the General Secretariat of the Council and the Commission, the Presidency intends to keep up contacts with the US authorities.
