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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 22 April 2016
To: Customs Cooperation Working Party and Law Enforcement Working Party
Subject: Summary of discussions

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set in CM 1964/1/16 REV 1, one intervention (DE) being added under AOB.

2. Information from the Presidency

In the context of the topic dealt with by JPCO ARES (Firearms), the Presidency briefed the delegates about:

- a matrix document to be presented in COSI SG and COSI regarding all initiatives undertaken in the field of firearms;
- the appeal made during the meeting of customs DGs to increase efforts in order to combat smuggling in firearms.

3. JPCO ARES - introduction

The Presidency briefly presented the Business Case for JPCO ARES (6492/1/16 REV 1, adopted through written procedure). Italy underlined that the aim of the operation - "to enhance (customs) controls, both at the external border of the Union and upon circulation of goods within the Union by adding specific intelligence regarding illicit trafficking of firearms and organising a follow up to seizures by the competent authorities including (where possible) financial investigations", should be put into practice in compliance with the provisions foreseen in the national legislation.

4. JPCO Ares - Stakeholders

In order to avoid duplication and to enhance synergies with other initiatives in this field, a representative of the driver for OAP Firearms, a representative of the Focal Point Firearms, representatives of DG TAXUD, OLAF and EFE (European Firearms Experts network) gave brief presentations on the main aspects of their activities.

5. JPCO Ares - Explanation of the Operational Plan

6. Time schedule for the JPCO Ares and Collection of plan relevant information for phase 1

7. JPCO Ares - Fine tuning with ongoing activities

Under points 5, 6 and 7, the Presidency briefed the delegates of the two Working Parties with respect to the practical elements of JPCO ARES - legal framework, phases, information exchange, as they are contained in 8048/1/16 REV 1 RESTREINT UE. An extensive discussion followed, two main problems being highlighted by the majority of speakers:

- the channels of communication: the use of two channels, one traditionally used by police, the other by customs, might lead to loss of information;
- the coordination and synergies with the other ongoing initiatives (mainly those undertaken in the framework of the OAP Firearms) in this area could require an adaptation of the envisaged schedule.

The Presidency announced that a revised version of the operational plan should be issued to address the problems put forward during the discussion.

8. JPCO Ares - Possible collaboration with third countries/international organisations

Under this point, Frontex highlighted a few aspects of its current activities that could be relevant for ARES. Frontex also offered support with respect to very specific elements of the JPCO (to be discussed and negotiated bilaterally).

9. AOB

DE reminded delegates about JCO Postbox, organised in the framework of the CCWP Action "Customs against Internet crime (C@iC)" and aiming at combating fraudulent and/or criminal customs-related acts committed or facilitated by the use of the internet. In this context, certain aspects of Postbox could be relevant for JPCO ARES.
