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NOTE

From: EU co-Presidency
To: Delegations

Subject: EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs - Annual
Report 1 June 2018 - 31 May 2019

Delegations will find annexed the above-mentioned annual report as adopted at the XXI High Level Meeting of the EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs held from 20 to 21 June 2019 in Paramaribo, Suriname.

**EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs -
Annual Report 1 June 2018 to 31 May 2019**

This report is the result of a regular analysis of the activities carried out and results of the Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs between the European Union (EU) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) from 1 June 2018 to 31 May 2019. The information contained in this report is limited to inter-regional programmes and does not contain information on other funded EU programmes at the regional and bilateral levels in the field of drugs.

I. EU-CELAC High-Level Meeting and Technical Committee Meetings

The EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs held its XX High-Level Meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 21-22 June 2018. The Sofia Declaration and the Annual Report May 2017-May 2018 were adopted at the High-Level Meeting.

In preparing the XXI High-Level Meeting, four meetings of the EU-CELAC Technical Committee on Drugs were held: on 28 November 2018 under the co-presidency of Austria and Suriname, where the results of the Sofia High-Level Meeting were discussed, and on 28 February, 25 April and 24 May 2019 under the co-presidency of Romania and Suriname.

The development of a new outcome document of the High-Level meetings was discussed at these four meetings, with the idea of keeping the traditional political declaration every five years (as well as other years as appropriate). The work on the new outcome document was prepared in two informal working sessions, which were convened under the coordination of COPOLAD, on 15 January and 7 February 2019. The outcome document of the XXI High-Level meeting to be held in Paramaribo, Suriname, from 20 to 21 June 2019, was specifically discussed at the meetings of the Technical Committee on 28 February, 25 April and 24 May 2019, where participants also worked on the draft agenda and identified topics for the thematic debates of the High-Level meeting.

Moreover, at the meetings of the Technical Committee on 28 November 2018 and on 28 February 2019, participants also exchanged information and views on the preparation of the ministerial and regular segments of the 62nd session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, which was to be held on 14-22 March 2019 in Vienna.

Finally, the countries and regions represented at the meetings of the Technical Committee gave an update on the drug situation and policy developments in their respective countries and regions in November 2018 and in May 2019.

II. EU-CELAC Cooperation - Cooperation Programme on drugs policies between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union (COPOLAD II) ¹

COPOLAD is the only EU funded programme covering all of the CELAC region and providing support for balanced, integrated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary and scientific evidence-based approach to the world drug problem **in Latin American and Caribbean**² countries, both in the Drug Demand and the Drug Supply Reduction fields, with a special focus on reinforcing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and a key task to provide support to the EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs.

COPOLAD continued to work in close cooperation with CELAC and EU countries to reinforce National Observatories on Drugs, to adopt quality and evidence-based criteria, both in demand reduction (prevention, treatment, harm reduction and social insertion), as well as supply reduction strategies. It also introduces sustainable approaches through capacity building and bi-regional exchange of good practices and lessons learned, providing as much support as possible to the EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs, a key instrument for dialogue and progress for the elaboration and implementation of public drugs policies in both regions.

¹ COPOLAD II (2016-2019) is a regional cooperation programme funded by the European Commission, with a total budget of EUR 10.000.000. The first phase (COPOLAD I) ended in June 2015.

² A first phase of the programme (2011 to 2015) covered all Latin American countries and – based on the evaluation of its results– a second phase was launched, including all CELAC countries, responding to the demand of Caribbean countries.

During the 3th COPOLAD II Annual Conference (June 2018 in Sofia, Bulgaria), the Programme's *Annual Action Plan* was presented and enhanced by CELAC and EU countries' representatives who participated at the meeting. The activities (included in the Action Plan 2018-2019) were developed as scheduled, with a very high and pro-active participation from Latin America, Caribbean and European Union countries, as well as with great support given by key multilateral partners in COPOLAD, such as the EMCDDA, the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO/WHO), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) of the Organisation of American States (OAS), the AIAMP, and bi-regional NGOs networks such as the Ibero-American Network of NGOs working on drug addiction (RIOD) and the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC).

This document includes a brief summary of some COPOLAD activities developed during the reporting period:

COMPONENT 1: Consolidation of National Drug Observatories

This component is aiming at the reinforcement of National Drugs Observatories (NDO), to facilitate sustainable developments for gathering and analysing quality information to support evidence based decision-making in each one of the CELAC countries. COPOLAD activities implemented in the present reporting period (June 2018-May 2019) include the following:

- a) **The development of four Working Groups (WG):** 1) "Promotion and facilitation of the establishment of National Early Warning Systems in the CELAC countries"; 2) "Studies to evaluate and validate scales and indicators of problematic drug use"; 3) Elaboration of National Drug Reports; and 4) Identification of new methodologies for a better understanding of emerging threats and new drug-related problems.
- b) **Drafting of different manuals:** "Guidelines for establishing a National Early Warning System"; "Guidelines for developing a National Drug Report" and "Guidelines to address and disseminate a National Drug Report tailored to the needs of different audiences"

- c) **Holding of the 3th Annual Meeting of National Drugs Observatories** (Prague, 25-29 March 2019) which provided the ground for presenting the work of the above mentioned WG and the opportunity to exchange developments – in each area – between countries, as well as deliver capacity building sessions to reinforce the role of (NDO).

These activities had the full support and close cooperation of the EMCDDA and the Inter – American Observatory on Drugs (OID-CICAD-OAS). The Integrated Threat Assessment Centre (ITAC) of Trinidad and Tobago led the Working Group for the Caribbean on establishing **Early Warning Systems** and included the participation of Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. A presentation on the status of development of these systems was delivered at the 3rd Annual Meeting of National Drugs Observatories in Prague.

COMPONENT 2: Capacity building in Drug Demand Reduction (DDR)

The aim of this component is to strengthen the capacities of the competent authorities dealing with Drugs Demand Reduction (DDR) in the CELAC countries.

- a) **Validation of the quality criteria in the field of DDR**, Twenty-two (22) CELAC countries, organized in **five working groups** (WG), have validated COPOLAD's quality criteria, after language adaptation considering cultural, legal and linguistic factors relevant in each country, built the instrument adjusted to the real contexts.
- ***The National Service for the Prevention and Rehabilitation of Drug and Alcohol Consumption (SENDA-Chile)*** lead two treatment groups: **WG 1)** Advanced level: Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador and Uruguay, for the advanced level; **WG 2)** Basic level: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela.
 - ***The Costa Rican Drug Institute (ICD)*** lead **WG 3** for the validation of the "prevention criteria" in: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Panamá, Peru and Venezuela.

- **National Drug Council (NDC- Trinidad and Tobago)** lead the validation of the: **WG 4)** prevention criteria in: Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Guyana and Jamaica; as well as **WG 5)** for validating the treatment criteria in: Bahamas, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago.

Participating countries have already started to look at how to implement accreditation of DDR programmes and services. The next step will be supporting them in their processes of developing normative frameworks for quality assurance and accreditation in DDR.

In the development of these activities, coordination with other institutions has been maintained: with the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), the Inter-American Commission on Drugs (CICAD/OAS), as well as with IDPC and RIOD, as collaborating institutions of COPOLAD; as well as CARICOM and UNODC, when relevant.

b) Sustainable capacity-building strategy. COPOLAD has maintained this year the implementation of:

- **International editions** of its training courses in the CELAC countries: **1) - The use of alcohol and other drugs: Evidence-based prevention;** **2) Comprehensive and Integrated Drug Related Socio-Sanitary System at the Primary Care;** **3) Public Health approach to drugs policies;** and has launched the first edition of course **4) Comprehensive approach to the prevention and reduction of the adverse consequences of drug use in populations in situation of high vulnerability: a public health strategy.**
- **National editions.** New countries have benefitted from COPOLAD's opportunity to develop national editions of the virtual courses: Guatemala, Bolivia, Argentina, Jamaica and Venezuela have developed national editions of the above-mentioned COPOLAD courses.

c) **Development of support tools for evidence-based DDR plans and programmes. During this period, COPOLAD has:**

- **Finalized the online platform *OneStep@aTime / Paso@Paso***, an interactive support system to facilitate planning, implementation and evaluation of DDR interventions. It provides technical support on the different stages needed for developing a plan or programme, facilitating the design of quality interventions by helping and guiding planning officials and professionals with responsibilities in this field. Three face-to-face training of trainers workshops will be organized during the last year of COPOLAD II, to facilitate its use in each interested country. It is accessible at: <http://pasoapaso.copolad.eu/en/> and: <http://pasoapaso.copolad.eu/es/>
- **Updated the Directory of Programmes and Services.** The objective of this activity is to update existing services in the interested Latin American and Caribbean Region. Allowing the mapping in the fields of: **1)** Prevention the onset of drugs use; **2)** Treatment, including early detection, services delivered for persons using drugs or at risk of doing so; **3)** Services in place for persons using drugs and being at high risk of social exclusion or health problems (outreach work, harm reduction, etc.); and **4)** Rehabilitation services. The process of updating is about to finish at the end of this period, and has been done in cooperation with RIOD for the Latin American countries, and CARICOM for the Caribbean countries. The activity will end by inviting each National Agency on Drugs to validate the update for its country. The Directory is accessible at: <http://copolad.eu/es/directorio-de-centros-y-servicios/mapa>

COMPONENT 3: Capacity building in Drug Supply Reduction (DSR)

The aim of this component is to strengthen the capacities of competent authorities dealing with Drugs Supply Reduction in CELAC countries by promoting inter-agency cooperation between agencies in charge of sectorial drug policies in CELAC and the EU. To achieve this objective, the following activities were developed in this reporting period:

- a) **Promotion of evidence based policies and exchange of best practices in the field of Alternative Development**, by implementing capacity building activities and Intra regional dialogue forums for CELAC countries, and also through the elaboration of a Study on institutional capacities needed in order to implement AD initiatives (Study developed in Guatemala, Paraguay and Peru, foreseen to be launched by mid-2019). Actually, responding to the increasing interest of new countries in this field, 6 new countries are joining COPOLAD activities on AD (Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras and Uruguay). By the end of this second phase of COPOLAD, 17 countries will be participating in this line of work (11 CELAC countries participating since 2016 -Bahamas, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago- and the 6 new interested countries previously mentioned). The 4th Intra-Regional Dialogue Forum on Alternative Development, will take place in July 2019 in Guatemala.

- b) **EU – CELAC exchange of best practices on "Money Laundering and Asset Recovery"**: COPOLAD brought together, in a bi-regional meeting held in May 2019 in Madrid, key experts from Police Anti-Drugs Units, Public Prosecutors Offices, Asset Recovery & Financial Intelligence Units from Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union, to promote the exchange of information and intelligence on: emerging trends relating to money laundering; importance of asset investigation; best practices in the EU and CELAC regarding information sharing through Asset Recovery Offices; recycling the proceeds of crime into national drugs control structures as well as the importance of international cooperation in this field.

- c) **Exchange of information on "Precursors control"**: The *Third Annual Week on Precursors* was held in Lisbon in November 2018. This edition was led by Portugal (SICAD, the Judicial Police and Customs) and Spain (CITCO-Ministry of Interior). The two COPOLAD Working Groups on Precursors also met in Lisbon and continued developing their work.

These activities were carried out in cooperation with the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the Inter-American Commission on Drugs (CICAD/OAS), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) as well as the three bi- regional networks participating in COPOLAD: the AIAMP, the IDPC and the RIOD.

COMPONENT 4: Policy Support, dialogue and consolidation of the Mechanism

This component has the objective to enhance and support existing bi-regional efforts and opportunities to promote the political technical dialogue EU- CELAC, on the nature of drug related problems and the best way to face them. In 2017, the main activities implemented were:

- a) The 3rd **COPOLAD II Annual Conference**, focussed on *Women and drugs policy, progress and challenges in the implementation of the gender approach and the empowerment of women as a crosscutting matter* (Sofia, Bulgaria, June 2018).
- b) **Fluent and permanent coordination with EU and CELAC countries, members of Technical Committee of the EU CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs:**
 - **Participation in Technical Committee meetings** of the Mechanism to report on the activities and works developed by the programme and with the constant support and commitment by countries.

- **Permanent support to the works of CELAC and the EU to agree on a new Outcome Document for the High-Level Meetings of the Mechanism (HLM):** COPOLAD organized two EU-CELAC working meetings, in its headquarters in Brussels (January and February 2019), positively contributing to advance the work towards having a new final document for the HLM. In this framework, COPOLAD also launched a new virtual platform, hosted in its website (e-room section), for countries to have access to all relevant information on the new outcome document, and having the possibility to interact between countries in an active and more effective way. The new Outcome Document will be adopted during the XXI HLM of the EU-CELAC Mechanism of June 2019 in Paramaribo (Suriname).
- **Coordination with CELAC Diplomatic Missions to the EU in Brussels,** members of the Technical Committee of the EU-CELAC Mechanism. COPOLAD maintains a fluent communication and coordination and shares the progress and activities developed. It also participates, when needed, in intra-regional CELAC meetings to provide information on specific activities and work taking place in the region. For instance, in February 2019, COPOLAD organized a meeting with CELAC Missions in Brussels, highlighting their key role on inter-institutional coordination in each country and, in general, the important role that Foreign Ministries have in contributing to the cohesion of drug policies for their success.
- The drafting of a **technical report on Gender approach in drugs related policies,** directed by the JND Uruguay with the participation of the CELAC interested countries, Spain and Portugal. Foreseen to be launched by the beginning of 2020.

COMPONENT 0: Crosscutting issues, quality and coherence

- a) On the occasion of the 62nd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) of the United Nations, the European Union organised a **Side event on "The role of coordination in drug policy: success stories in the framework of COPOLAD II"** (15 March 2019, UNODC Vienna, Austria).
- b) **The Permanent Council of COPOLAD**, met on 17 June 2019 in Paramaribo (Suriname), with an active participation from EU and CELAC member countries. As a reminder, the criteria for countries to become members are the following: **Countries already having a drug observatory**: commit to strengthen it, ensuring the availability of a competent/technical Focal Point for COPOLAD; **Countries not having a drug observatory**: commit to establishing one, ensuring the availability of a competent/technical Focal Point for COPOLAD; **Countries without an Early Warning System**: commit to establish one; **Countries committed to actively participate in the COPOLAD activities**.

The Council holds advisory and follow-up functions, especially: **1)** Participation in designing/implementing actions, including definition of sub-objectives/final contents for Working Groups; **2)** Advise on programme implementation and suggest adjustments, when required; **3)** Contribution to define the Annual Action Plan, and suggest adjustments when needed. Proposals and commitments on leaderships; and **4)** Contribute actively to the visibility of COPOLAD among stakeholders, both internationally and inside each participating country.

III. Other EU-funded inter-regional initiatives in which some CELAC countries participate

A. The Cocaine Route Programme in CELAC countries

The multi-year Cocaine Route Programme (CRP) was launched in 2009, and since then the EU has committed over EUR 60 million to more than 40 countries along the cocaine route(s) from the countries in Latin America to Europe via Central America, the Caribbean and Africa.

The overall objective of this trans-regional programme is to enhance the capacity for international cooperation by law enforcement and judicial services of the partner countries to contribute to the fight against international criminal networks, thereby encouraging South-South cooperation and exchanges of best practices. By providing support to partner countries through technical advice and encouraging cooperation via nine self-standing components, the CRP has been carrying out activities in four main domains, notably the interception of illicit flows of drugs, the fight against money laundering, the improvement of information sharing and criminal justice cooperation and investigations.

As the programme evolved, the focus of Article 5 of the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) on a trans-regional approach was emphasised. Projects such as AMERIPOL-EU, GAFILAT-EU and PRELAC - which had a regional focus - ended under the CRP and have, in most cases, been integrated in different forms under regional programmes of the EU. Concentrating on its core trans-regional focus, the CRP currently has two "operational" components delivered through four projects:

- The interception of illicit flows of drugs by air (AIRCOP and COLIBRI) and sea (SEACOP); and
- The improvement of criminal justice cooperation and investigation (CRIMJUST).

In addition, the Cocaine Route Monitoring and Support (CORMS) project, the monitoring and support mechanism of the programme, assists the European Commission in managing the integration of the different CRP components into a coherent, mutually reinforcing programme, as well as ensuring coordination with other relevant initiatives. It also provides the European Commission with advice and analysis on project implementation as well as updates on relevant trends.

a) Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP)

Implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in partnership with the International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL) and the World Customs Organization (WCO), the Airport Communications Project (AIRCOP) was launched in 2010. AIRCOP aims at strengthening detection, interdiction and investigative capacities of participating international airports through sharing operational information and the establishment and training of inter-service Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces (JAITFs) to better equip beneficiary countries in the fight against illicit trafficking and other forms of transnational organised crime. To encourage the real time transmission of information aimed at intercepting illicit shipments JAITFs are connected to international law enforcement databases and communication networks (INTERPOL I-24/7 and WCO CENcomm).

CELAC countries included in AIRCOP's geographical scope are: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Jamaica, Panama and Peru.

Currently, AIRCOP covers 28 beneficiary countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and five associate countries. During AIRCOP Phase IV, eight new JAITFs were established. In total, there are 24 JAITFs, which are currently operational, and four JAITF under establishment. In addition, 2 K-9/dog anti-drug units have been established, and more than 4000 officers trained (20% women), through 250 training and mentoring sessions. The established task forces participated in 24 international joint operations, during which the controls on departing, transiting and arriving passengers were heightened.

Since the operationalization of the first JAITFs in 2012, the different task forces recorded over 2000 arrests and seizures, both in passengers and cargo areas. Globally, the seizures include 7200 kg of cocaine; 2600 kg of khat; 5800 kg of cannabis; 1900 kg methamphetamine, 375 kg of heroin, 114 kg of amphetamine; 1500 kg of precursors; 13300 kg of illicit and counterfeit medicines; US\$ 14,1 million of undeclared currency; US\$ 2.75 million counterfeit currency; 9600 kg of cigarettes and tobacco; 662 kg of ivory; 1200 kg of pangolin scales; 232 kg of gold; 468 firearms and over 4100 ammunitions; as well as fake/fraudulent passports and visas.

b) Seaport Cooperation Project (SEACOP)

Starting in 2010, the Seaport Cooperation Project (SEACOP) is currently in Phase IV. It is implemented by FIIAPP and EU Member States' law enforcement agencies. In addition to the 11 countries in the Caribbean from Phase III (British Virgin Islands, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis, Montserrat, Dominica, St. Lucia, Barbados, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago), seven priority countries in the LAC region have been included in Phase IV to include Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Panama and potentially Ecuador and Peru.

The overall objective of SEACOP is to support the fight against illicit maritime trafficking and associated criminal networks in the targeted countries and regions. Its purpose is to provide the means (equipment, IT tools, and the related skills) to targeted countries and regions to:

- Reinforce their seaport control and maritime intelligence capacities by setting up, consolidating and equipping dedicated Units in seaports or sensitive coastal areas;
- Improve or set up local maritime information and control systems;
- Enhance the operational delivery and cooperation at national, regional and transregional levels.

Created to strengthen capacities to combat maritime trafficking along the cocaine route, SEACOP aims to set up institutional elements called Joint Maritime Control Units (JMCU) and Maritime Intelligence Units (MIU) in key ports.

SEACOP held its first Transregional Maritime Intelligence meeting in Natal (Brazil) from 27 to 29 November 2018. A second Transregional Maritime Intelligence meeting will be held in Bogota (Colombia) in July 2019.

In January 2019 the biggest ever shipment of contraband was seized in the framework of SEACOP. Namely, Judicial Police of Cape Verde seized 10 tonnes of pure cocaine. The team that conducted the operation received training and equipment from SEACOP. The whole operation was coordinated by MAOC-N.

c) Strengthening criminal investigation and criminal justice cooperation along the Cocaine Route (CRIMJUST)

In December 2015, the EU and UNODC signed an agreement for the implementation of CRIMJUST, a four-year project with a geographical scope on selected countries in West Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. Implementation is carried out by UNODC in partnership with INTERPOL and Transparency International.

The CRIMJUST project aims to build synergies and complementarity with the other projects of the Cocaine Route Programme (primarily AIRCOP, SEACOP), and support the Programme in its strategic approach against organised crime and drug trafficking. To do this, the CRIMJUST project carries out work in the following main domains:

- Complementary and coordinated action with other projects of the Cocaine Route Programme
- Capacity building of criminal justice entities in West Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean (law enforcement and the judiciary) to detect, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate organised crime and drug trafficking cases

- Effective inter-regional criminal justice action to tackle organised crime and drug trafficking (including South-South cooperation and the exchange of relevant experience with EU countries)
- Re-enforcement of institutional integrity, accountability and anti-corruption related practices of criminal justice entities when dealing with organised crime and drug trafficking cases.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, CRIMJUST is active in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru as associate countries, and in the Dominican Republic and Panama as beneficiary countries. In agreement with the European Commission, the geographical scope of the project has recently been extended to include Bolivia.

CRIMJUST has been actively working on supporting law enforcement and other justice sector institutions in strengthening integrity, accountability and resilience against corruption and influence of organised crime.

d) COLIBRI

Project COLIBRI started in early 2019 and is currently in its inception phase. In Latin America and the Caribbean region it has started engaging with Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Peru, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago.

COLIBRI aims to build capacity in combatting customs fraud and illicit trafficking in general aviation, both at international hub airports and domestic airfields in Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa. Specifically, it will build capacities on intelligence, targeting and inspection techniques for business aircraft at international airports; and on methods of targeting and intercepting smuggled goods brought in by private light aircraft to small airfields or open spaces. Additionally, COLIBRI plans to produce a global database on light aircraft to improve regional intelligence, international cooperation and risk analysis.

e) **EL PAcCTO (Europa-Latinoamérica Programa de asistencia contra el crimen transnacional organizado)**

For the first time in Latin America, a regional programme deals with the fight against organised crime (including drugs), covering the entire criminal chain: police cooperation, judicial cooperation and penitentiary systems. The programme also covers money laundering, corruption, cybercrime, gender issues and human rights. EL PAcCTO is a demand-driven programme covering over 70 public institutions in 18 Latin-American countries (Ministries, General Prosecutors' Offices and Supreme Courts). Technical activities started in 2018.

The programme has reached its cruise speed in 2018 with a comprehensive preparatory work made with national authorities for the establishment of country roadmaps with specific actions to be implemented in 2019 in the three areas of police, judiciary and penitentiary. More than 200 activities were carried out in the first year. A major achievement in August 2018 has been the signature of the AMERIPOL Convention by 5 countries, with Brazil and Argentina shaping a reinforced police cooperation against international organised crime. In May 2019, a joint operation in the framework of AMERIPOL led to a successful outcome, with Argentina and Bolivia arresting an important drug dealer.

The work with INTERPOL to track fugitives is also generating a great interest from LA countries with several cases of fugitives wanted for serious crimes (including drug trafficking) that have been solved in the past year. EL PAcCTO represents a concrete EU response to support dialogue on Citizen Security within the region and with the EU Member States, in line with Chapter 10 of the EU-CELAC Action Plan.

B. Implementation of Chapter 10 (Citizen Security) of the EU-CELAC Action Plan

According to Chapter 10 (Citizen Security) of the EU-CELAC Action Plan, two inter-governmental seminars and a workshop were to be organized on citizen security.

The first two EU-CELAC seminars on citizen security were held on 27-28 September 2017 in The Hague, the Netherlands and on 16-17 January 2018 in Panama City, Panama. The third event took place from 23-24 January 2019 in Belize City, Belize. The events were co-organised by the EU (DEVCO and EEAS) and CELAC (Panama and Belize in their capacity of Chapter 10 Coordinators). With the three events concluded, the requirements of Chapter 10 of the EU-CELAC Action Plan were fulfilled.

Key topics of the third EU-CELAC Citizen Security workshop held in Belize City in January 2019 were: the role of civil society and local governments in citizen security, criminal justice and intelligence sharing, police and border control cooperation. Along the organizational requirements, the workshop was divided into plenary and panel sessions, allowing in-depth discussions in different formats (government only and government-civil society panels).

The first major topic discussed was criminal investigation and intelligence sharing where experts from EU Member States (Spain and Italy) presented the European experience and benefits of intelligence sharing during investigations, including experience in fighting organized crime in the Americas and worldwide. This was followed by presentations by CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) and Mexico. The panel discussion highlighted the need for establishing and harmonizing law enforcement agencies first at national, then at regional/international level for ensuring effective cooperation. The importance of coordinated work of police, customs, financial investigative and justice agencies was highlighted including joint teams for investigation.

The second topic discussed was border control and police cooperation. One of the programme directors of EL PAcCTO presented police cooperation issues and options for knowledge sharing, following the signature of the 'Acuerdo de Buenos Aires' in 2018 for AMERIPOL. A high interest was noted on smuggling and data protection, as well as on police cooperation networks, such as AMERIPOL and Latin-American Police Cooperation Centers (Centros Latinoamericanos de Cooperación Policial - CLCP). Most countries expressed interest in working closer with EU institutions in this field and highlighted the role of EL PAcCTO in supporting the establishment of networks on these issues.

The third topic was the role of civil society and local governments in enhancing citizen security with the involvement of different NGOs and local government organizations. Concrete initiatives were presented showcasing the involvement of citizens in enhancing security at local level (Municipality of Saltillo in Mexico). Both governments and CSO representatives underlined the importance of dialogue and mutual trust between the police and the citizens in order to foster security. This topic enriched the discussions of the previous two governmental seminars with a new perspective, which will have benefits if included in the future dialogue.

The EU-CELAC Foreign Ministers' Meeting Declaration (16-17 July 2018) called for the strengthening of the bi-regional dialogue on citizen security. Following the three seminars, a joint EU-CELAC proposal will be made on the modalities of strengthening the bi-regional dialogue in this field.
