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#### NOTE

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| From:    | General Secretariat of the Council   |
| To:      | Delegations  |
| Subject: | EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs<br>- Annual Report (1 June 2022 - 31 December 2023) |

Delegations will find in the Annex the final version of the above-mentioned annual report, endorsed at the XXIVth High-Level Meeting of the EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs, which took place in La Paz (Bolivia) on 22 February 2024.

**EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs -  
Annual Report  
1 June 2022 - 31 December 2023**

This report is the result of a regular analysis of the activities carried out in relation to 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 2022 to 31 December 2023. The information contained in this report is limited to inter-regional programmes and does not contain any information on other EU-funded programmes at regional and bilateral levels in the field of drugs.

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

The CELAC-EU Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs ('the Mechanism') held its XXIII<sup>rd</sup> High-Level Meeting on 24 June 2022 in Asunción (Paraguay) in a hybrid format, under the co-Presidency of Paraguay and France. The High-Level Meeting adopted the Annual Report for the period from 1 June 2021 to 31 May 2022<sup>1</sup> and endorsed the Outcome Document<sup>2</sup>.

Several meetings of the EU-CELAC Technical Committee on Drugs were held in Brussels: on 24 November 2022, under the co-Presidency of the Czech Republic and Bolivia<sup>3</sup>, on 14 June 2023, under the co-Presidency of Sweden and Bolivia<sup>4</sup> and on 18 October 2023 under the co-Presidency of Spain and Bolivia<sup>5</sup>, which was preceded by three informal working group meetings on 5, 11 and 16 October 2023.

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<sup>1</sup> 10233/22  
<sup>2</sup> 10234/22  
<sup>3</sup> CM 5350/1/22 REV1  
<sup>4</sup> CM 3131/23  
<sup>5</sup> CM 4804/23

The Technical Committee meeting on 24 November 2022 discussed the drug situation and policy developments in the EU and CELAC countries, and focused on the evidence- and human rights-based approach. The European Commission gave presentations on various EU regional cooperations programmes, and COPOLAD III was also discussed. The meeting had an exchange of views on the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). Finally, the incoming SE and ES Presidencies presented their plans for 2023 and shared information on the preparations of the XXIV<sup>th</sup> High-Level Meeting.

At the Technical Committee meeting on 14 June 2023, participants held the preparations for the XXIV<sup>th</sup> High-Level Meeting of the Mechanism. Delegations also discussed developments on COPOLAD, Global Illicit Flows Programme (GIFP) and other regional programmes, the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and UNODC, and the priorities of the co-Presidencies of the Mechanism.

In order to prepare the Technical Committee meeting on 18 October 2023, and in particular to advance with the negotiations on the draft declaration of the XXIV<sup>th</sup> High-Level Meeting of the Mechanism, the Bolivian and Spanish co-Presidencies of the Mechanism agreed to convene an informal Working Group, open to the participation of all CELAC and EU Member States. Three meetings of this informal Working Group were held on 5, 11 and 16 October 2023 to discuss the draft declaration, which allowed to bring the negotiations on the text forward.

At the Technical Committee meeting on 18 October 2023, the negotiations on the draft declaration of the XXIV<sup>th</sup> High-Level Meeting advanced further, and were completed by a written exchange following this meeting. Delegations also exchanged on the intersessional meetings of the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and on the preparations for its high-level segment in 2024 to take stock of the implementation of all international drug policy commitments and outline the way forward to 2029, in line with the Ministerial Declaration of 2019<sup>6</sup>. Updates on COPOLAD, Global Illicit Flows Programme (GIFP) and other regional programmes were provided.

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<sup>6</sup> CND resolution 66/1

The XXIV<sup>th</sup> High-Level Meeting of the EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs was initially scheduled to take place in Spain in 2023. Unfortunately, due to supervening events at national level, it could not be held in the European Union. Given this situation and after several exchanges between both the co-Presidencies, Bolivia assumed the organisation of the event in its territory and scheduled it for 22 February 2024. This was agreed as a constructive and exceptional solution, without setting a precedent for the future of High-Level Meetings that should be convened every year in one of the countries that share the co-Presidency, with each region alternating, in accordance with the consensual approach of the Working Procedures of the Mechanism<sup>7</sup>. It should be noted that the text of the draft declaration of the XXIV<sup>th</sup> High Level Meeting was agreed during the second semester 2023 under the Spanish and Bolivian co-Presidencies of the Mechanism, in view of its expected approval at the High Level Meeting on 22 February 2024 in La Paz (Bolivia).

## **II. EU-CELAC Cooperation: Cooperation Programme on drugs policies between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union**

COPOLAD is the only EU-funded programme covering the entire CELAC region and providing support for a balanced, integrated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and scientific evidence-based approach to address the world drug problem in Latin American and Caribbean<sup>8</sup> countries. COPOLAD covers the various fields of drugs policy from both a drug demand and a drug supply reduction perspective, as well as promotes evidence-based policies, with monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and with the task of providing technical support to the EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs.

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<sup>7</sup> ST 5545/1/09 REV 1

<sup>8</sup> An initial 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, in response to the demand of Caribbean countries.

## COPOLAD III

The third phase of COPOLAD started in February 2021 for a period of 48 months and with a budget of EUR 15 million.

COPOLAD III is managed by a consortium formed by the International Ibero-American Foundation for Public Policies and Administrations, Spanish Cooperation (FIIAPP) and the Italian-Latin American International Organization (IILA), with the participation of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

Building on the achievements of its previous phases<sup>9</sup>, COPOLAD III continues to promote technical and political dialogue between CELAC and the EU.

COPOLAD III is aligned to the EU Drugs Strategy 2021-2025, and delivers a balanced approach to positively impact public policies related to both drugs supply and demand in the following fields:

Supply reduction:

- sustainable and integrated alternative development;
- cooperation in drug trafficking investigations;
- fight against illicit capital and money laundering;
- control of chemical precursors;
- penal law reforms and alternatives to imprisonment.

Demand reduction:

- health and social programmes;
- harm reduction.

COPOLAD's activities incorporate issues of gender equality and human rights.

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<sup>9</sup> COPOLAD II (2016-2019) was a regional cooperation programme funded by the European Union, with a total budget of EUR 10 000 000, and managed by the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Public Administration and Policies, Spanish Cooperation (FIIAPP). The first phase (COPOLAD I), also managed by FIIAP, ended in June 2015.

COPOLAD also supports National Drugs Observatories in evidence-based policy making and in identifying new threats. In addition, the programme has been supporting the EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on drugs for 13 years<sup>10</sup>.

COPOLAD III covers the entire CELAC region and provides support for an integrated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary development and with an approach to address the world drug problem in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean based on scientific evidence. In addition, the programme is based on a results-oriented methodology based on the demands and needs of partners and on a Team Europe spirit that encourages coordination, complementarities and synergies at EU level.

At **regional level**, the programme operates through the creation of Working Groups (WG) bringing together countries with similar interests, while promoting **south-south or triangular cooperation**. The expertise provided by Task Forces will ensure the necessary support for implementing action plans and specific technical assistance.

At **national level**, specific technical assistance was offered through roadmaps based on the needs identified by participating countries and their national authorities.

The integration of a gender equity perspective is a priority for COPOLAD III. The specific needs of women and girls are being mainstreamed by the programme, and attention is being paid to reducing gender inequality by adopting tailored-made approaches for each component.

### **Implementation (January 2022 - ongoing)**

In 2022, the COPOLAD programme has carried out various actions to advance compliance with its results framework.

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<sup>10</sup> COPOLAD I started on January 31, 2011

Thus, in **the regional dimension** of the work of COPOLAD III, 15 working groups<sup>11</sup> were initially set up to facilitate the participation of partner countries, to contribute to the exchange of information, knowledge and good practices. After an evaluation, work at regional level was optimised in 7 working groups:

- 36 countries – 29 CELAC and 7 EU<sup>12</sup> – work together to strengthen the technical capacity and institutional role of National Drug Observatories (NDOs). A methodological and conceptual guide for the incorporation of rights and gender issues in the NDO's information systems (indicators, tools, protocols, analysis processes) has been produced.
- 33 countries – 28 CELAC and 4 EU<sup>13</sup> – work together to reduce drug use. A guide to social inclusion and a working methodology for national systems for the social and labour reintegration of people with consumption problems, with a gender and differential approach, are being drawn up.

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<sup>11</sup> Working groups: Strengthening National Drug Observatories; Adaptation/generation of addiction care programmes and services to meet the needs of women and vulnerable populations and measures to facilitate their access; Support for the development of national systems for the socio-occupational inclusion of people with consumption problems, with a differential and gender approach; Addressing drug-related development vulnerabilities in the territory; Control of chemical precursors for the illicit manufacture of drugs; Review of the proportionality of criminal drug law and Development of alternatives to arrest or imprisonment for minor drug offences; Improving the sustainable development, human rights and gender outcomes of drug policies; Improving the analytical and advocacy capacity of NDOs; Development and Strengthening of Early Warning Systems (EWS); Integrated Sustainable Alternative Development Interventions; International cooperation in intelligence and drug trafficking investigations; Special research techniques, new technologies and inter-agency cooperation; Strengthening of financial and asset intelligence systems (Latin America); Strengthening financial and asset intelligence systems (Caribbean).

<sup>12</sup> 29 CELAC Countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela. EU Member States: Spain, Croatia, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Italy.

<sup>13</sup> 28 CELAC Countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela. EU Member States: Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, Portugal.

- 32 countries – 29 CELAC and 3 EU<sup>14</sup> – work together on the drug supply reduction component. An agreement was signed with the Latin American Financial Action Task Force to improve measures to prevent money laundering and harmonise regulatory frameworks. A cooperation agreement has been concluded with the Ibero-American Anti-Drugs Prosecutors' Network of the Ibero-American Association of Public Ministries (AIAMP) for the use of covert agents in international investigations on drug trafficking. A working group composed of members of the Anti-Drugs Units of the National Police Forces in LAC countries has also been set up to improve special techniques for investigation and use of new technologies. Bi-regional cooperation in the field of precursor control has been improved, through technical assistance and the proposal of a training programme, in addition to the exchange of information, experiences, intelligence, good practices and lessons learned.
- 18 countries – 17 CELAC and 1 EU<sup>15</sup> – work together in the Working Group on “Integrated and Sustainable Alternative Development”, managed by GIZ GmbH, where the activities implemented have been focusing on strengthening gender-responsiveness and environmental conservation efforts within the framework of development-oriented drug policies.

**Support for national roadmaps.** In the second half of 2022 COPOLAD initiated national key dialogue processes that continued during 2023. A total of 93 national proposals have been received, of which 73 have been pre-selected depending on their relevance, impact capacity or feasibility. To date, partnership agreements have been concluded with 23 countries. These support measures cover the following themes:

- 26 national actions on strengthening the drugs observatories, research networks, inclusion of differential approaches within the programming of the observatories, evaluation of national drug policies, impact evaluation on development of drug policies.

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<sup>14</sup> 29 CELAC Countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela. EU Member States: Italy, Portugal and Spain.

<sup>15</sup> 17 CELAC Countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Panama, Peru, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela. EU Member State: Germany.



- 24 national actions on the demand side: addressing problematic consumption associated with mental health; addressing comprehensively the challenges of consumption, care, support and care for children, girls and adolescents under the supervision and protection of the State; study on opioid consumption trends; comprehensive care and harm reduction with community approach for people who use drugs in conditions of social vulnerability.
- 23 national actions on the supply side: social use of seized goods, control and disposal of chemical precursors, alternatives to imprisonment for minor drug-related offences; productive skills of women and young people deprived of their freedom to return to work and promote their economic autonomy.
- As integrated approaches, the support covers policies and actions to reduce vulnerabilities in young people at risk of linking to micro-trafficking networks and the use of psychoactive substances; or preventive monitoring to take action in situations of state response or non-response that may give rise to human rights violations. In some cases, there are specific supports for the development or technical review of National Drugs Strategies.

The programme has promoted a specific working strategy with the Caribbean countries. Since February 2023, there has been a Task Force dedicated exclusively to promoting the work of COPOLAD in the Caribbean, and the countries of the region have increased their participation.

### **COPOLAD's contribution to the tasks of the EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs**

One of COPOLAD's main objectives is to provide technical support for the work developed by the EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs.

COPOLAD III held its first Annual Meeting in person in June 2022 in Asunción, Paraguay, after the end of the COVID 19 restrictions. This allowed the support to the organisation of the High Level Meeting of the Mechanism in the same city, a milestone for the return to normality of the Mechanism. With this, the technical support from COPOLAD to the Co-Presidencies of the Mechanism (Czech Republic, Sweden, Spain, as well as Bolivian Co-Presidency) has been active. In this context, COPOLAD has supported discussions in Latin America and the Caribbean on aspects prioritised in the HLM on money laundering and micro-trafficking, especially at the events held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic (March 2023) and Fortaleza, Brazil (April 2023), where a large group of countries in the region participated. COPOLAD continued participating in the Technical Committee meetings of the Mechanism, providing an update on progress made. Meetings and regular exchanges were held with the CELAC co-Presidency of the Mechanism and the CELAC diplomatic missions in Brussels, with the aim of sharing inputs and identifying proposals and ideas and of exploring further modalities of collaboration.

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

#### **A. The EU Global Illicit Flows Programme in CELAC countries**

The Global Illicit Flows Programme (GIFP) was launched in 2019 as a successor to the former Cocaine Route and Heroin Route programmes, to adapt EU programming and responses to the developing criminal landscape globally. By broadening its scope and remit, the GIFP moved beyond a commodity-based approach to respond to the challenges of global illicit flows and their interdependence. The programme provides support to law enforcement and judicial authorities in partner countries by promoting regional and trans-regional cooperation, information sharing, capacity building, and by providing tools and research to counter organised crime. More specifically actions under the GIFP support partner countries with technical assistance for addressing organised crime comprehensively by focusing on maritime and aviation trafficking, arms trafficking and supporting trans-regional investigative best practices and post-seizure judicial outcomes among others.

CELAC countries participate in the following actions under the GIFF:

- **AIRCOP (Airport Communication Project)** implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in partnership with the World Customs Organisation (WCO) and INTERPOL, is the longest running GIFF project (since 2010). It builds interdiction capacities at selected international airports by establishing Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces (JAITFs), promoting information sharing at international level, as well as intelligence-led approach to countering transnational organised crime and terrorism.
- Currently in phase VI running until 2026, CELAC countries (and airports) covered by AIRCOP include: Argentina (Buenos Aires), Barbados (Bridgetown), Bolivia (Santa Cruz), Brazil (Sao Paulo, associate), Colombia (Bogota, associate), Dominican Republic (Santo Domingo and Punta Cana), Ecuador (Quito), El Salvador (San Salvador), Jamaica (Kingston and Montego Bay), Panama (Panama City), Peru (Lima, associate). Engagement with Paraguay has started most recently as part of AIRCOP's IV expansion, whereas Chile has expressed interest in becoming part of AIRCOP and establishing a JAITF. JAITFs are established in Bolivia (La Paz), Ecuador (Guayaquil) and Trinidad and Tobago with non-EU funding.
- Several mentoring and exchange programmes took place in Argentina, Barbados and Cuba (in October and November 2023) with regional training activities in Argentina and Jamaica (on 27 November-1 December 2023) on topics including insider threat, fraudulent documents, investigative interviewing, synthetic drugs trafficking among others.
- So far in 2023, AIRCOP JAITFs in LAC have seized 811 kilos of cannabis, 119 kilos of cocaine, USD 462,417 of undeclared cash, 53 fraudulent or stolen documents (including passports, residence permits and visas), 4 firearms and 6 kilos of unregistered gold.

- **COLIBRI (Monitoring and Controlling General Aviation)**, launched in 2019 and implemented by the WCO, assists in tackling illicit trafficking via general aviation. The second phase of COLIBRI started in April 2023 and will be running until 2026. Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay are partners in the project with two more countries to be identified in the region (possibly Bolivia and Ecuador).
- COLIBRI developed the Geoportal, a geolocalisation tool aimed to support surveillance of movements by general aviation to enhance international cooperation and information-sharing among law enforcement agencies.
- Following the scoping missions and the successful delivery of a series of training activities on controlling general aviation, coordination and preparatory meetings COLIBRI organised its first operation Rutilant in January 2023. The operation resulted in two seizures of cocaine (in Brazil and Paraguay), totaling approximately 948 kg, in addition to 23 immobilised aircraft due to administrative infractions and the localisation of various illegal/clandestine runways as well as increased cooperation in controlling illicit flows via general aviation.
- COLIBRI also launched its e-learning training programme and produced a Technical Handbook on Monitoring and Controlling General Aviation.
- COLIBRI undertook a monitoring mission to Argentina in early October 2023, with a scoping visit to Bolivia in November 2023. The project held its 5th Expert coordination meeting in November 2023 in Brussels.
- **SEACOP (Seaport Cooperation Project)**, implemented by a Consortium of EU Member States led by Expertise France, aims to contribute to the fight against maritime illicit trade and associated criminal networks in Latin America, the Caribbean and West Africa, by improving cooperation and information sharing at national, regional and transregional level, including with Europol and Frontex. Its fifth phase ended in October 2023, but the sixth phase began immediately after. CELAC countries covered by SEACOP include: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Colombia, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Panama, Peru, Paraguay, St Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

- In 2022 SEACOP has renewed commitment with a number of countries in the region through the signature of MoUs, held regional and international events, national steering committees and delivered refresher training and mentoring activities to dedicated Maritime Intelligence and Joint Maritime Control Units (MIUs and JMCUs).
- In February 2022, with the support of the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre (Narcotics) – MAOC (N), SEACOP launched a regional initiative in Latin America called “Threat and Case Studies” where participating countries exchange experiences, aiming to support the fight against organised crime by improving information exchange, building trust and facilitating international cooperation.
- In December 2022, SEACOP held a major International Seminar “The Pacific-Atlantic Axis: How to provide a comprehensive response against illicit maritime trafficking” in Guayaquil, Ecuador.
- During 2023 SEACOP trained units have supported a number of seizures in the region resulting in great amounts of drugs (primarily cocaine and cannabis) as well as firearms and ammunition seized.
- In May 2023, SEACOP supported operation ‘Caribe’, aiming to increase cooperation and trans-regional information exchange in maritime trafficking. The exercise brought together Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Dominican Republic and Colombia, as well as SEACOP partners MAOC-(N), Frontex, CARICOM IMPACS JRCC, RSS, JIATF-S, in addition to French and Spanish law enforcement agencies. Among the results 1147 kg of cocaine were seized in the Dominican Republic and 322,1 kilos of cocaine in Colombia. At the end of September 2023, SEACOP held a debriefing meeting of operation ‘Caribe’ in the Dominican Republic followed by the workshop ‘From Cocaine to Timber: New challenges for SEACOP VI’.
- On 30 August – 1 September 2023, SEACOP held a regional focal point meeting in Asuncion (Paraguay) bringing together representatives from Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Dominican Republic to share experiences and lessons learned on emerging threats, routes, and challenges related to trafficking at sea.

- A scoping mission to Suriname was conducted in early October 2023 to assess its potential integration into SEACOP VI.
- In October 2023 SEACOP held a NSC and review of the JMCU and MIU in St Vincent and in St Kitts and Antigua.
- **CRIMJUST (Global Programme on Criminal Network Disruption)**, implemented by UNODC in collaboration with INTERPOL since 2016, currently in phase III it will run until end of 2025. Initially focused on strengthening criminal investigation and criminal justice cooperation along drug trafficking routes, in third phase it is acknowledging the need to comprehensively address all illicit flows, with increased focus on financial investigations, mainstreaming human rights and gender-sensitive approaches.
- In CRIMJUST III the following CELAC countries are indicatively identified: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, El Salvador and Uruguay, Guyana, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Saint Lucia (to be refined during inception); with the possibility of involving Chile and Mexico on an ad-hoc basis to share expertise, good practices or to develop criminal justice responses to a specific trafficking issue. The precise list of countries of intervention will be further refined during implementation.
- Alongside capacity-building activities, CRIMJUST has increasingly focused on further developing its landmark activity, the inter-regional investigative case fora, which bring together prosecutors and investigators working on transregional organised crime cases. In August a Regional Investigative Case Forum between MERCOSUR countries was held supported by CRIMJUST. Another one bringing together investigators and prosecutors from Spain, Argentina, Brazil together with MAOC-N and RFAI took place in Spain in early October 2023.

- In June 2023, CRIMJUST held its kick off meeting for phase III in Rio, Brazil bringing together partner countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama, Peru, Paraguay and Uruguay (and countries from Africa) to discuss international cooperation on targeting high-level criminal networks by strengthening post-seizure investigations. The meeting was followed by a workshop on financial investigation strategies in organised crime cases.
- In November 2023 CRIMJUST held an event to support the implementation and dissemination of the Ethical Principles Charter of Iberoamerican Public Prosecutors in Uruguay and to support the Iberoamerican prosecutors meeting on the elaboration of a protocol for the protection and security of Iberoamerican prosecutors in Paraguay. In addition the project held a meeting to define a roadmap for the implementation of the programme activities on gender and human rights in Ecuador on 27-28 November 2023.
- Since April 2021, the GIFP is supported by **MASIF (Monitoring and Support of the Global Illicit Routes Programme)**, which ensures close monitoring of GIFP projects and improved coordination, coherence and complementarity between them and with other initiatives in the fight against organised crime and drug trafficking. It also provides the European Commission with advice and analysis on project implementation as well as updates on relevant trends. In 2022, MASIF finalised the [Maritime threat assessment of illicit flows across the Atlantic](#) report (together with SEACOP), developed a [Mapping study on EU external actions on the fight against organised crime](#), delivered an end-of-term evaluation of COLIBRI and supported the organisation of the Crime Fighting week, a flagship EU event on organised crime, held in Brussels in September 2022.
- DISRUPT (Disrupting firearms trafficking flows) emerged by incorporating the learning, knowledge and experiences gained from two components of the GIFP namely the Illicit Arms Records and tracing Management System (iARMS) and the Countering Firearms Trafficking projects, both part of the INTERPOL and UNODC Firearms Programmes respectively. Implemented jointly, DISRUPT (which will be ending in February 2024), links law enforcement efforts with broader criminal justice responses in Central and South America and West and Central Africa to disrupt illicit trafficking flows of firearms.



- TRIGGER, INTERPOL intelligence-led operations address transnational firearms trafficking and gun violence. TRIGGER IX-Latin America supported by DISRUPT was conducted across Latin America from March to April 2023 with the participation of 15 countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay) and the involvement of more than 100 national law enforcement agencies. TRIGGER IX resulted in 8,263 illicit firearms and 305,803 ammunition recovered, 14,260 arrests, 373 criminal investigations initiated, 20 OCGs disrupted and the seizure drugs worth USD 5.7 billion. The operational hub was based in Foz do Iguaçu, at the tri-border area of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay.
- In April 2023, DISRUPT (UNODC) organised two activities in Brasilia (Brazil), including the “Meeting of the Informal Contact Group of the Triple Border and Chile” and a “Subregional Workshop on Arms Trafficking and Related Crimes in the Southern Cone on Electronic Evidence and International Cooperation” which included the participation of magistrates and officials of the Public Prosecutor’s Office and the Police from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile and Paraguay.
- In July 2023, DISRUPT (UNODC) held an informal contact group meeting followed by a subregional workshop on international cooperation on firearms trafficking in Bogota, Colombia.
- DISRUPT held an assessment mission and legislative workshop in Costa Rica (6-10 November 2023), INTERPOL National Firearms training to Chile (27 November - 1 December 2023) and support to operation Armstrong Latin America through the EMPACT Firearms OAP (November 2023).
- ECO-SOLVE (Disrupting Illicit Environmental Commodity Flows Through Innovative Activities) has been designed to monitor the illicit online trade of environmental commodities, extract useful and digestible data that can inform law enforcement actions, while driving greater transparency and accountability in tackling illicit online markets. It recently joined the GIFP and will run until August 2026. It will cover multiple regions but focus on the Amazonia basin (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, and Peru) in Latin America. The project is currently in inception phase and developing its workplan.



## **B. EL PAcCTO: Europa-Latinoamérica Programa de asistencia contra el crimen transnacional organizado (EUR 27M, 2017-2022)**

The programme ended its first phase on December 2022. It has promoted regional and bi-regional cooperation along the entire criminal justice chain, fostering judicial, police and penitentiary cooperation, to tackle transnational organised crime. EL PAcCTO also had two sub-projects:

- “EL PAcCTO: Support to AMERIPOL”, to reinforce the legal and technological capabilities of AMERIPOL; and
- operational investigations on high profile fugitives with INTERPOL.

EL PAcCTO held its **final meeting in Buenos Aires on 9-10 November 2022**. It was an occasion to analyse all the work and actions developed since the beginning of the programme. It has contributed to more effective and strategic cooperation between the EU and Latin American countries. Among the main results the following can be mentioned:

- **Under the justice-related track**, the most important achievement was the establishment of an EU-LA high-level dialogue of justice institutions with the adoption of a common agenda for action and the definition of a **Justice Policy Cycle (agreed in July 2022)**, to foster judicial cooperation in priority areas.
- It is important to highlight the **support provided to AMERIPOL**, to reinforce its legal and technical capacities and to assist in its institutionalisation process. One of the main objectives of “EL PAcCTO Support to AMERIPOL project” was to strengthen and consolidate AMERIPOL in the region (similar to Europol in the EU). This project has provided continued technical support and training to Latin American countries to enhance the capacities of AMERIPOL to better coordinate and cooperate in the field of police joint operations and in exchange of sensitive information. It has also developed the technical data information system for AMERIPOL countries (called SIPA) and provided them with the software and training to use it. Despite the fact that the project ended in November 2022, Brazil is leading the institutionalisation process of AMERIPOL towards the signature of the Treaty of AMERIPOL in the near future.
- The operations carried out by the **INTERPOL project support to EL PAcCTO** in the area of investigation of fugitives, had also considerable achievements in terms of joint operations to locate fugitives, demonstrating its operational effectiveness.

- Another important achievement of the programme is the establishment of the **Latin American Internal Security Committee (CLASI)**. On 2 March 2022, CLASI was officially launched in Brussels. A platform similar to the EU's COSI (Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security), CLASI gathers Latin American Ministries of Interior of member countries to jointly define strategies and articulate public policies against transnational organised crime. The launching of CLASI is the direct result of EL PAcCTO's long-term efforts to promote coordination and cooperation between LA countries on justice and security matters.

So far, 14 countries have joined CLASI (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Mexico and Uruguay), while others will be able join in the future. Argentina assumed the first CLASI Presidency, while Panama took over the second Presidency in March 2023 (Ecuador and Chile will take over the third and fourth presidencies). The First CLASI Summit took place on 7-8 November 2022 in Buenos Aires, and was organised with the support of EL PAcCTO.

- **Launching of the bi-regional anti-narcotics Task Force:** a Joint Declaration adopted between the EU Ministers of Interior and the Latin American Ministers/Vice-ministers, members of CLASI, was adopted in March 2022. Both regions welcomed the creation of CLASI and stressed that "strengthening the political dialogue and developing the regional and international law enforcement cooperation are essential to more effectively fight organised crime, in particular drug trafficking, but also human trafficking, arms trafficking, financial crime, cyber-crime and environmental crimes". Countries reaffirmed "the importance of joining forces to provide appropriate and concrete responses to the many security challenges". They agreed to "establish a temporary bi-regional counter narcotics Task Force, whose mandate will be to launch joint operations, on the basis of a shared threat assessment".

In this framework, **the bi-regional counter narcotics Task Force had its first operational meeting in Buenos Aires (Argentina) on 19-21 October 2022**. The meeting was led and co-organised by the EL PAcCTO and the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre - MAOC (N), with the collaboration of other EU Programmes, such as COPOLAD III on drug policies and SEACOP on maritime trafficking, and with the participation of the Eurofront project on border management and the CRIMJUST on judicial cooperation.

The launching of the bi-regional Task Force was a success with high-level participation of Police Units and Public Prosecutor's Offices from Latin American and EU countries. Also, European Union agencies participated such as the EMCDDA, Eurojust and Frontex, as well as AMERIPOL, Interpol and the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) covering High Risk Criminal Networks.

- Another important result of EL PAcCTO is the creation of **IDEAL (Instrumento de Documentación y Evaluación de la Amenaza en Latinoamérica)** in order to encourage a joint regional assessment of criminal threats, similar to SOCTA (Serious Organised Crime Threat Assessment) in Europe. This instrument has enabled Latin American countries to identify current and potential criminal threats as well as to agree on joint priorities in the fight against organised crime.

- As for **police cooperation**, EL PAcCTO has also promoted the **creation of specialised police networks as well as inter-institutional coordination mechanisms**, such as the Jaguar Network (environmental crimes); ELIPSIA (fight against online child sexual abuse); Ciber Network (fight against cybercrime), UELLA (Cryptocurrencies and anti-money laundering activities); CibEL@ (Organized Transnational Crime); Arco (trafficking of arms), Lynx (trafficking of human beings); Redcopen (Network of Penitentiary Systems) and Penitentiary Academies Network (RAP).

#### **EL PAcCTO 2.0 (EUR 58.8M November 2023 with a duration of 49 months)**

Considering the positive results and the excellent relations created with Latin American partners in EL PAcCTO, a new phase of programme has been approved by EU Member States at the NDICI Committee of 17 November 2022, with a Commission Decision adopted on 7 December 2022. The new programme, called EL PAcCTO 2.0, will be implemented by an EU Member State Consortium (Spain, France, Italy, Portugal and The Netherlands), and was officially signed in Brussels on 21 November 2023. The Bolivian co-Presidency of the EU-CELAC Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs participated in the signature ceremony with a brief intervention on behalf of the CELAC region, highlighting the importance of EL PAcCTO to foster bi-regional cooperation against organised crime. The high-level official launch of EL PAcCTO 2.0 will take place in March 2024.

EL PAcCTO 2.0 will include Latin American and Caribbean countries, and it will be **aligned to the TEI for LAC on Justice and Security**, with the aim to continue working with Latin American and Caribbean countries in the fight against organised crime.

### **C. EUROFRONT - Support for Integrated Border Management in Latin America**

Within the framework of the security development nexus, two actions were signed off in 2019 under the EUROFRONT programme to foster intra-Latin American and bi-regional cooperation in the areas of integrated border management (IBM) and the fight against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling. Human rights, gender, and values such as good governance, rule of law and fundamental freedoms, are included as cross-cutting topics in both components.

EUROFRONT is implemented at four terrestrial pilot border-crossing posts<sup>16</sup> involving seven partner countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Peru). While the first component, on IBM, is being implemented by a consortium with FIIAPP as leader and IILA and IOM as partners, the second component, on the fight against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling, is managed exclusively by IOM. Moreover, EUROFRONT receives support from the EU Member States (notably ES, IT, PT, PL, and LT) and FRONTEX.

As EUROFRONT started in the second quarter of 2020, amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and closed borders, implementation was considerably hampered and delayed. Since then, EUROFRONT has considerably accelerated its implementation.

EUROFRONT Component 1 is developed according to the following pillars of technical assistance: (i) policy strengthening; (ii) institutional strengthening; (iii) capacity building; (iv) support to technology development.

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<sup>16</sup> The four target border areas are:

- Rumichaca (Colombia-Ecuador)
- Desaguadero (Peru-Bolivia)
- Triple Frontera (Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay)
- Aguas Blancas-Bermejo (Argentina-Bolivia).

With regard to Component 1, important efforts were devoted to analyse the current legislation and to effectively introduce border management issues at regional level, in organisations such as MERCOSUR and CAN. Technical guides and protocols were designed along with national institutions by addressing issues such as documental fraud, profiling, human rights or migratory intelligence, among others. Several seminars and training activities are also ongoing on different aspects related to Integrated Border Management. In addition, a specialised training programme is being currently designed to strengthen and improve the capacities of professionals on border control issues at any level. These strategic actions will be reinforced through specific improvements at the level of infrastructure.

EUROFRONT Component 2 ensured the preparation of extensive diagnostics on trafficking and smuggling in the four targeted borders. The programme is currently supporting technical dialogue on trafficking and smuggling at national, binational and regional level. In parallel, efforts are currently focused on assistance to national authorities in the improvement of their national information systems, and the definition and implementation of training plans on these two phenomena.

The programme is increasingly including regional activities, such as the organisation of a seminar in Asunción on "The narcotraffic spaces and the urgency to coordinate investigations in penitentiary and border areas" on 21-22 June 2022 (coordinated with COPOLAD III and EL PAcCTO), a Regional Meeting to Fight Cross-Border Crime, which took place in Bogotá on 7-9 March 2023, and the Platform on trafficking and smuggling, which was established in Buenos Aires in July 2022 among the countries of the region, as a framework for the exchange of skills and best practices, with the aim of improving prevention, assistance, protection of victims of trafficking in human beings, investigation and prosecution of crime. EUROFRONT launched a Regional Meeting on 16-17 November 2023 on the "guarantee of human mobility based on human rights". The meeting was set up as a forum for dialogue and exchange between government officials and security specialists of participating countries from South America and the European Union.