



# The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Professional Conference of the European Police Oversight Bodies and Anti-Corruption Authorities

Nova Gorica, 04 – 06 November 2009

## Declaration 2009 ("Perla" Declaration)

The Heads and key representatives of the national Police Oversight Bodies (POBs) as well as the Heads and key representatives of the national Anti-Corruption Authorities (ACAs) of the EU Member States and of Member States of the Council of Europe met in Nova Gorica, Slovenia, from 04 to 06 November 2009 for their 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Professional Conference. They warmly welcome the achievements that have been accomplished in recent years and declare as follows:

Expressing their gratitude to the Slovenian Commission for the Prevention of Corruption and to the Ministry of Interior for hosting the Conference as well as stating their deepest thanks for their hospitality that has made the Conference a resounding success;

Recalling numerous international conventions, instruments and mechanisms, such as the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC); the Council of Europe Civil and Criminal Law Conventions on Corruption; the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions; the EU Hague Programme; and the Comprehensive EU Policy against Corruption; as well as the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the UN principles relating to the status and functioning of national institutions for protection and promotion of human rights (Paris Principles); the European Convention on Human Rights; the Council of

Europe European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT); and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;

Anticipating the EU Stockholm Programme (2009) which should contain another call for developing and implementing a comprehensive EU policy against corruption;

Recalling EPAC's Vienna Declaration 2004, Lisbon Declaration 2005, Budapest Declaration 2006, Helsinki Declaration 2007, and Manchester Declaration 2008;

Noting the relevant decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and the publication on 12 March 2009 of the opinion of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights concerning the independent and effective determination of complaints against the police;

Welcoming that during nearly a decade of solely voluntary informal collaboration, EPAC has always kept on reinforcing a sustainable structure, which culminates in the adoption of its new Constitution at this year's Conference, continuing to allow European POBs and ACAs to intensify their participation in a variety of activities within the Network, including in different working groups;

Welcoming the participation of 16 observers from 7 countries and looking forward to intensifying their fruitful cooperation with these organizations;

Endorsing the participation of organizations of the EU contact-point network against corruption (EACN), acknowledging the EACN's first achievements, especially the adoption of its Constitution, and affirming their commitment to further support the EACN's development building upon the existing cooperation between the EPAC:

1. Reiterate the necessity that POBs as well as ACAs are given the necessary independence in accordance with the fundamental principles of the respective national legal system;
2. Promote an effective system of oversight of policing and secure the respect for the rule of law and human rights in all policing and anti-corruption activities;

3. Ensure transparency, accessibility, accountability, legitimacy, impartiality and integrity in all systems created for the oversight of policing and for the anti-corruption work;
4. Continue to support the development of common standards and principles for POBs as well as ACAs in 2010 with a focus on the promotion of standards by member organizations, and thus enhance accountability and legitimacy also beyond their own structures;
5. Acknowledge and welcome the work and results of the working groups 'PO principles', chaired by England & Wales, 'Staff Exchange', chaired by Belgium, and 'EPAC/EACN Constitution', chaired by the President;
6. Invite all EPAC Partners to participate in one or more of the 2010 EPAC Working Groups: 'EPAC (EACN) Finances WG', chaired by the President, 'Staff Exchange WG', chaired by Belgium, 'AC Standards WG', chaired by Slovenia, 'PO Principles WG', chaired by England & Wales, and – on a voluntary basis – support the Secretariat;
7. Strengthen other forms of international cooperation and sustainable exchange of experience and knowledge, in particular by promoting the above mentioned international conventions and mechanisms, thus strengthening the European approach in these instruments also on the operational level;
8. Call for the establishment of a robust and effective review mechanism for the UNCAC at the upcoming 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of the States Parties to the UNCAC in Doha from 9 to 13 November 2009, and support further anti-corruption efforts within the framework of the Council of Europe and the OECD;
9. Welcome once again the successful development of the annual International Anti-Corruption Summer School, IACSS, in which, in the last three years, more than 150 anti-corruption practitioners from over 40 countries of 4 continents have participated, and where an intensive dialogue between the academic and the operational part of the anti-corruption community has reached a high qualitative level. The IACSS has been promoted through the use of EPAC channels, officially supported by EPAC partners and co-financed by the European Commission;

10. Endorse and support the development and maintain the momentum of the EU contact-point network against corruption, EACN, as a further significant step in the collaboration of European POBs and ACAs building upon the existing cooperation between the EPAC and as a strong sign of the overall will to enhance the fight against corruption in Europe, especially in the context of the expected commitment towards anti-corruption within the Stockholm Programme of the EU.

11. Commit themselves to engage as EPAC in the anti-corruption activities of the above mentioned programme, in order to effectively implement its tasks on the operational level;

12. Reiterate the inclusiveness of EPAC as far as Member States of the EU and the Council of Europe are concerned, as well as foster the more formal operational cooperation within the EU by strengthening the cooperation between the contact-points of the EACN under the umbrella of EPAC;

13. Recommend that the text of this Declaration be widely circulated by the EPAC and EACN partners in their countries and beyond.