

Brussels, Monday, 23 September 2019

Presentation by Ms Oana Consuela FLOREA regarding  
the 111<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Management Board of Europol (23-24 May 2019)

Dear colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Please allow me to start by expressing my gratitude to Mr Andrei Lință for inviting me, in my capacity as Co-chair of the JPSG, to attend the 111<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Europol's Management Board. Also, please allow me to take this opportunity and praise the consolidated relationship that our Group has developed, since the beginning of its activity, in 2017, with the Management Board of Europol.

From the very beginning, I would like to point out that, this year, the Management Board of Europol has extended the number of items on the agenda to which the JPSG representative could attend, thus demonstrating trust and the constructive cooperation built between our two bodies over the last months.

My main goal as Representative of the JPSG to the Management Board of Europol was to create strong links between the Agency and our Group, and to report not only on the key topics, but also as to the relevant observations and concerns raised by the Management Board members during the May meeting, on the budget for instance.

In my report – that I sent you in July – you may also find the summary of some fruitful discussions that I had with the Executive Director of Europol, with the Chairperson and the members of the Management Board, or with the representative of the European Commission. I am sure that many of these topics will be discussed during this meeting too because they are of paramount importance for the Agency's future development.

In this challenging European security environment, I emphasise that it is important to keep our channels open throughout the whole year and not only during our bi-annual meetings. I take this opportunity to welcome the openness and readiness of Europol's representatives and especially of its Executive Director, Ms Catherine De Bolle, in answering all our questions and requests. In my interventions I highlighted that it was extremely important for the JPSG to receive – in due time – all necessary information for exercising our parliamentary scrutiny. I have also paid special attention to the core instruments of the JPSG in exercising its functions – oral and written questions – and to the possibilities to make a better use of these tools.

Ms Catherine De Bolle presented, in her speech, the main proposals for organizational changes, according to the Strategy 2020+ of Europol.

In order to adapt to the new economic environment, Europol will centralise all its existing internal financial functions in one single Financial Unit – which will be established within the Capabilities Directorate. Furthermore, Europol has tried to respond swiftly to the request of the Member States in the area of financial and economic crime and will establish the new European Financial and Economic Crime Centre (EFECC) within the Directorate on Operations. I am sure that the Europol's representatives will be more than glad to offer you more details about this new Centre.

At that May meeting, the Management Board formally adopted the Consolidated Annual Activity Report for 2018, a document which was previously shared with the JPSG, for consultations, at the beginning of this year.

Regarding external relations, Ms Catherine De Bolle provided an overview of the objectives pursued within the Europol's new external Strategy, a document which is now subject to further deliberations and which will be completed next year.

The last part of the meeting has brought in-depth discussions on Europol's budgetary perspective for the forthcoming years and the long-term implications for the Agency' activity. The 2018 Work Programme revealed that the future budgetary constraints have led to de-prioritising important projects and activities of Europol. The list of such de-prioritised activities has raised deep concerns among the Management Board members and indeed, if we thoroughly examine what it contains, we have reasons to worry.

In this respect, the lack of investment in technology and forensic capabilities will prevent the Agency, on long term, to cope with the changing environment – especially as concerns innovation and digital assets. Moreover, the number of contractual agents could decrease in the nearby future, and the Agency may become unable to deliver appropriate operational support to the Member States.

Finally, and to make a step further, Mr Lință was invited to convey the Board's position to the Europol's budgetary authority, by way of a letter, ahead of the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting, which took place on 6-7 June 2019. This letter was sent to President Tajani and to Ms Carmen Dan, Romanian Minister of Internal Affairs, on 4 June 2019, and then conveyed to the JPSG Co-Chairs.

Dear colleagues,

The discussions that took place during the Management Board meeting have raised important aspects regarding the Europol's future activities and organization. We must continue our debate and attach great importance to overcome the ongoing challenges.

Thank you for your attention and please feel free to ask any questions!