



## PRESS STATEMENT

## European Confederation of Police

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### **Excessive budget cuts in police and law enforcement in some EU Member States will pave the way for organised crime and corruption**

#### **EuroCOP President Heinz Kiefer: “Excessive cuts into police budgets undermine EU standards for rule of law and efficient administration.”**

EuroCOP Executive adopts call for a stability pact to preserve democratic and rule of law standards in the EU

At its regular meeting in Luxembourg yesterday the Executive Committee of the European Confederation of Police has called upon the EU to agree a stability pact to preserve democratic and rule of law standards in the Union.

The call comes as a reaction to excessive cuts into police and law enforcement budgets in some member states that are struggling with the effects of the financial crisis.

“The EU must not to loose sight of the democratic and rule of law standards that were established by the European Councils of Copenhagen and Madrid in 1993 and 1995,” said EuroCOP President Heinz Kiefer after the meeting.

The Executive Committee position calls for a stability pact for the common area of freedom security and justice that must ensure that Member States live up to common minimum standards with regards to law enforcement quality and capacities:

“The EU must not allow any Member State to fall short of the Copenhagen criteria through the effects of the current economic crisis through excessive and short sighted cuts into budgets of essential public services, such as police.”

Mr Kiefer: “The EU Commission has already been forced to freeze payments for Bulgaria and Romania due to deficits in administrative capacity and fight against corruption. Further cuts into law enforcement and administrative budgets will surely not solve this problem.”

“We are extremely concerned that this will happen to member states like Lithuania and Latvia as well in the near future. The negative effects of a rise in organised crime and corruption will long outlive the current economic crisis. They will prevent these countries from participating in economic recovery.”

The European Confederation of Police, EuroCOP, is the umbrella organisation of 35 national Police Unions and Staff Organisations from 26 European States. It represents the interests of over 500.000 police officers in Europe. [www.eurocop-police.org](http://www.eurocop-police.org)

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### Position of the EuroCOP Executive Committee

adopted 12 May 2009

#### A Stability Pact for the common area of freedom security and justice –

EuroCOP call for a new commitment to the 'Copenhagen criteria'

1. In 1993 the Copenhagen European Council, defined a set of EU membership criteria, which are often referred to as the 'Copenhagen criteria'. These were complemented by the Madrid European Council in 1995:
2. According to these criteria, any EU member state must have achieved
  - stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;
  - the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union;
  - the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic & monetary union.
  - appropriate administrative and judicial structures that permit that Community legislation is implemented effectively
3. The effects of the financial crisis make it necessary for the EU to renew its commitment to keeping these standards as the basis for close cooperation among its Member States and economic and social prosperity of the EU.
4. The EU must not allow any Member State to fall short of these criteria through the effects of the current economic crisis through excessive and short sighted cuts into budgets of essential public services, such as police.
5. The current economic crisis makes it apparent that an EU wide fight against organised crime, trafficking in human beings and terrorism cannot be based exclusively on approximation of legislation.
6. To complement approximation of legislation Member States need to ensure efficient enforcement in these areas. Member States that risk falling short of providing efficient enforcement must not be left to address this on their own.
7. EuroCOP calls on Member States to agree a stability pact for police based on the Copenhagen criteria. This stability pact for the common area of freedom security and justice must ensure that Member States live up to common minimum standards with regards to law enforcement quality and capacities.
8. In addition, EuroCOP calls upon Member States to set up an early warning mechanism that ensures that measures can be taken before the capacities of any Member State to contribute to the common fight against organised crime, terrorism and corruption are severely damaged.
9. With the imminent adoption of the new multi annual framework programme on justice and home affairs, the EU Council is in a unique position to renew its commitment to the Copenhagen Criteria and to show citizens that their concern for a life in peace and freedom of crime matter.