



JOINT SUPERVISORY BODY OF EUROPOL

PRESS STATEMENT

On instigation of the Europol Joint Supervisory Body, the EU Parliament, the Commission, the Secretariat General of the Council and various other institutions met on 17 October in Brussels to discuss data protection challenges and Europol.

Europol is the European Police Office processing criminal information with the objective to improve police cooperation in the field of terrorism, unlawful drug trafficking and other serious forms of international crime with an organised criminal structure. Safeguarding data protection is a prominent element in the construction of Europol and is the cornerstone in the legal regime for the processing of personal data by Europol. Recognising the importance of law enforcement, the JSB always promotes that efficient law enforcement can be achieved without any detriment of individual rights. The Director of Europol confirming that Europol is fully aware of its legal obligations to keep its data protection standards at the highest possible level, stressed Europol's specific interest to protect personal data since data protection also adds value to the quality of the data processing by Europol.

The crucial role of Europol as well as the need to encompass the fight against crime with sufficient safeguards to ensure the fundamental rights of the individual were reconfirmed: data protection is an intrinsic aspect of the way in which individuals, private and public offices and governments should act.

Initiatives to further improve the fight against crime such as the Prüm Treaty, the processing of PNR data, the introduction of the availability principle, providing access to data bases as SIS II, VIS and perhaps in the future Eurodac for law enforcement need proper assessment and discussion on their data protection implications and in doing so, finding ways and means of implementing fundamental principles such as the right to liberty and security and protection of personal data.

It was also stressed that implementation and use of already existing instruments of law enforcement cooperation should be improved. Experience gained by the JSB clearly show that there is still a lot of work governments and law enforcement authorities can do to successfully fight serious crime.

The need for a legal instrument creating an adequate system of data protection arrangements in the area of law enforcement, guaranteeing a high and equivalent level standard of data protection was stressed.

The Conference conclusions as well as the presentations will be made available on the JSB website <http://europoljsb.ue.eu.int>

About the Europol Joint Supervisory Body,

Europol handles a large amount of sensitive information about individuals and it is important that Europol should take account of the rights of individuals when using this information. As a safeguard, the Europol Convention, which set up both Europol and the Joint Supervisory Body, contains a number of provisions relating to data protection. The main task of the Joint Supervisory Body - which is an independent body - is to ensure that Europol complies with these data protection principles. The Joint Supervisory Body is composed of members or representatives of each of the national data protection supervisory bodies of the EU Member States.