Private security: network of contact points for the responsible national authorities. Initiative Spain

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PURPOSE : to present a Spanish initiative which aims to set up a Network of contact points of national authorites responsible for private security. CONTENT : private security activities can only be understood and considered as complementary and subordinate to public security; this is why the European Union Member States have various checks and administrative procedures regulating security activities carried out by private individuals, thus ensuring that security can be enjoyed by all. An analysis of the private security sector reveals that a number of problems sometimes exists, such as the entry of unqualified people into the profession, the lack of product type-approval standards, the low level of training of private security agents, irregularities in the running of firms, or infringements of provisions regulation the activities of companies providing private security services. In the context of the European Union, two seminars were held (in 2000 and 2001) with private security experts which exposed a number of shortcomings suggesting that the activity and provision of services by natural and legal persons involved in the private security in the single market should be supervised and regulated. For instance, there is a need to set up permanent communication channels to exchange situations and experiences facilitating the solution of operational problems arising in that area and to carry out intelligence exchanges between the various police services. Consequently, it seems convenient and appropriate to set up a network of contact points of national authorities with responsiblity for private security. The Network of contact points of national authorities with responsibiltiy for private security will have the following objectives: - facilitating the coordination and cooperation between the various national bodies with responsibility for the private security sector; - exchanging information on the models for regulating private security in each Member State and in the candidate countries; - establishing best practices, and in the long term, examining the possibility of approximating the models and best practices. The tasks carried out by the Network of contact points of national authorities with responsibility for private security will include setting up and maintaining an Internet site that permits: - access to all the legislation of Member States and candidate countries on private security; - a permanent contact between the national authorities with responsibility for private security; - exchanges of experience on the efficiency of security systems, alarm centres; transport and deposit of funds, works of art, etc; - knowledge of the companies operating in the sector, their particulars, activities, geographical area of activity, and staff training. With regard to the financing of the Network, it is proposed that the expenses arising from the setting up of the Network may be financed by all the Member States, in accordance with the scale of the Gross National Products, or from the Union's budget.