Judicial cooperation: creation of a European judicial network

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In adopting the report by Mr Rinaldo BONTEMPI (PSE, I), the European Parliament has approved the proposal for a joint action, subject to amendments designed to strengthen the proposed judicial network. It calls for: - the network to combat all forms of serious crime: organized crime, corruption, drug trafficking; - network contact points to have extensive practical experience in combating organized crime and to be fully conversant with the constitutional provisions, legal traditions and legal procedures of the Member States; - Parliament to be informed of the composition of the judicial network (including alternates); - the network to respect the rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual; - multilateral links between the contact points and the circulation of information to be facilitated. Parliament has also amended the timetable and venues for network meetings and added the list of cases concluded or pending, wherever there is evidence of a link, to the types of information which must be permanently accessible through the network. Finally, it asks to be kept informed, through an annual assessment report, about the operation of the network and calls on the Council to ensure there is no overlapping between the responsibilities allocated under joint actions and those assigned to Europol.