Police cooperation: common use of liaison officers posted abroad by member States. Initiative Denmark

2002/0815(CNS) - 27/02/2003 - Final act

PURPOSE : to regulate questions relating to the fight against serious cross-border crime through the common use of liaison officers. COMMUNITY MEASURE : Council Decision 2003/170/JHA on the common use of liaison officers posted abroad by the law enforcement agencies of the Member States. CONTENT : this Decision follows Joint Action 96/602/JHA providing for a common framework for the initiatives of the Member States concerning liaison officers. In the light of experience in applying the Joint Action and in the light of the provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam on combating cross-border crime, cooperation amongst Member States on the tasks assigned to, and the posting of liaison officers to third countries and international organisations needed to be strengthened. The main provisions of the Decision are as follows: - each Member State must ensure that its liaison officers maintain direct contacts with competent authorities in the host State or the international organisation, in order to facilitate the collection and exchange of information; - each Member State's liaison officer must also contribute to the collection and exchange of information which may be used to combat serious cross-border crime, including information providing a readier knowledge of the legal systems and operational methods available in the States concerned; - Member States must inform one another of their intentions as regards the secondment of liaison officers to third States and the General Secretariat of the Council each year of the posting of liaison officers, their duties and any cooperative agreements between the Member States on the posting of liaison officers. The General Secretariat sends an annual summary of this information to Member States and to Europol; - liaison officers posted to the same third country or international organisation must meet regularly to exchange relevant information. The Member State holding the Presidency of the Council, or the incoming Presidency, ensures that its liaison officers take the initiative to hold such meetings; - liaison officers posted to the same third country or international organisation must provide one another with assistance in contacts with the authorities of the host State. Where relevant, Member States may agree that their liaison officers will share tasks; - liaison officers in third countries and international organisations must provide their respective national authorities with information relating to serious criminal threats to other Member States not represented by their own liaison officers. National authorities have the task of assessing whether the Member States concerned should be informed; - there are provisions for joint seminars for liaison officers and for Member States to designate contact points within their competent authorities; - Member States must facilitate the processing of Europol's requests to obtain information from liaison officers in third countries or international organisations where Europol is not represented. Europol's requests are to be addressed to the Member States' National Units, which will take a decision on the request. ENTRY INTO FORCE : 26/03/03.