

Euro: designating Europol as the Central Office for combating counterfeiting. Initiative Germany, Spain, France, Italy, United Kingdom

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PURPOSE : to present an initiative of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Kingdom of Spain, the French Republic, the Italian Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland with a view to adopting a Council Decision on protecting the euro against counterfeiting, by designating Europol as the Central Office for combating euro counterfeiting.

CONTENT : the euro has also become the target of third-country counterfeiters. A further increase in the number of counterfeit euros, which would jeopardise the free circulation of euro banknotes and coins, is to be prevented. The Convention for the Prevention of Counterfeiting Currency, agreed on 20 April 1929 in Geneva, should be applied more effectively under the conditions of European integration. Third countries need a central contact for information on counterfeit euros and all information on counterfeit euros should be brought together at Europol for purposes of analysis.

In view of Council Regulation 1338/2001/EC of 28 June 2001 laying down measures necessary for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting, the Council considers it appropriate for all Member States to become contracting parties to the Geneva Convention and set up central offices within the meaning of Article 12 of the Convention. The Council considers it appropriate to designate Europol as the central office for combating euro counterfeiting. This is the aim of this proposal.

This draft initiative stipulates that for the Member States which are Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention, namely Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom, Europol shall act as the central office for combating euro counterfeiting. For counterfeiting of all other currencies and for central office functions not delegated to Europol pursuant to the Declaration, the existing competencies of the national central offices shall remain in effect.

Member States, which are not yet Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention, namely Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia, shall accede to the Geneva Convention. Upon acceding to the Geneva Convention, they shall, in accordance with the Declaration, designate Europol as the central office for combating euro counterfeiting.

The governments of the Member States which are Contracting Parties shall issue the Declaration and commission the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to forward the Declarations to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The governments of the Member States which are not yet Contracting Parties shall, in the event of accession, promptly issue the Declaration and commission the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to forward the Declaration to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.