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From:	General Secretariat
To:	Coreper/Council
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Subject:	Draft Council conclusions on the exchange programme for police officers inspired by Erasmus

At its meeting on 6-7 April 2010, the Police Cooperation Working Party reached agreement on the draft Council Conclusions on the exchange programme for police officers inspired by Erasmus as set out in annex.

COREPER is therefore requested to invite the Council to approve the above-mentioned draft Council Conclusions as set out in annex.

**DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE
Exchange Programme for police officers inspired by Erasmus**

Whereas:

- (1) In the period since the European Council meeting in Tampere in October 1999 decided to set up a European Police College (CEPOL), the European Union's work on cooperation on police training has advanced considerably.
- (2) The added value of this aspect of cooperation between the Member States was also highlighted by the European Council in the November 2004 Hague Programme on strengthening freedom, security and justice in the EU, which stated that the establishment of systematic exchange programmes for police officers was an appropriate means of stepping up police cooperation.
- (3) The exchange programmes for senior police officers and police training staff, which the European Police College has been running since 2006, are a result of the work on carrying out this mandate.
- (4) The Stockholm Programme - *an open and secure Europe serving and protecting the citizens*, adopted by the European Council on 10 and 11 December 2009, highlights the importance for the successful implementation of the Programme of training and of increasing mutual trust between authorities and departments in the Member States, as well as between decision-makers, since such mutual trust is the basis for efficient cooperation in this field.

With that in mind, the European Council recommends fostering a genuine European police culture and invites the Commission to establish a specific Erasmus-style exchange programme in this field.

Recognising that:

- (5) The development of the area of freedom, security and justice was structured on the basis of concerted action by the Member States and institutions of the European Union founded wholly on the mutual trust called for in the Stockholm Programme. As far as police cooperation is concerned, it is necessary to take into account the fact that, since its creation in 2000, CEPOL has been promoting this climate of mutual trust by bringing together senior police officers with a view to facilitating cross-border cooperation on combating crime and maintaining public order and security.
- (6) Similarly, the continuation of specific programmes inspired by Erasmus for border guards and customs officers is an essential factor if a common professional approach to protection of external borders is to be fostered among them.
- (7) An area of freedom, security and justice for the benefit of citizens presupposes the existence of national players who are aware of the transnational dimension of the current threats to the principles which underpin that area, as well as of human resources better equipped to tackle them. In this context, the training aspects are of major importance.

Agreeing on the following:

- (8) Without prejudice to the Member States' competence in drawing up and developing the respective training plans for police officers, it is understood that the development of police cooperation on combating crime should go hand-in-hand with increased cooperation on police training, which should be organised on the basis of enhanced mobility, mutual learning and the exchange of experiences and good practices.

- (9) Mobility is a factor which helps strengthen mutual trust between law enforcement personnel in the Member States; this is necessary for combating jointly and efficiently the threats currently hanging over citizens' security. The evaluations of the EU's education and training programmes, including in particular the Erasmus programme, show that mobility breaks down barriers between people and groups, makes the advantages of European citizenship more tangible and helps people to be more flexible and open in developing their career.
- (10) Police cooperation between the Member States is already sufficiently developed to allow and recommend that a step forward be taken and that national law enforcement structures be opened up to new models by using the experience gained by the European Union in other areas of training in order to ensure mutual trust and deeper cooperation through language learning and the exchange of knowledge and best practices.
- (11) CEPOL¹, as Union body specialised in police training, should eventually be responsible for managing Union exchange programmes regarding training for all police officers, whether high ranked, middle or basis ranked police officers and police students as well as police experts and training staff. With this goal the Council Decision 2005/681/JHA establishing CEPOL should be amended as appropriate.

INVITES THE EUROPEAN POLICE COLLEGE (CEPOL):

- To develop an exchange programme for police officers inspired by Erasmus in accordance with Article 7(g) of the CEPOL Decision, according to the following features:
 - The programme should initially cover a four-year period.
 - The aim of the programme, which is intended for all agents and officials in police departments in the Member States, is to conduct exchanges for the purposes of study, mutual learning and the pooling of knowledge and best practices in police work.

¹ OJ, L 265, 1.10.2005, p. 63.

- The ultimate aim of these exchanges is to improve, on the basis of adequate target recipients, the efficiency of the work and the effectiveness of national administrations in connection with the strengthening of the European Union as an area of freedom, security and justice; to promote mobility and mutual trust between law enforcement departments, to promote the European dimension in police work and to be able to assess and demonstrate the benefits of the exchanges in increasing the transference of knowledge and mobility.
 - In drawing up and implementing the exchange programme, CEPOL should study the possibility to take into account existing initiatives also to apply the Bologna-related criteria in police training, as well as Frontex and Customs training projects.
 - CEPOL should also take into account its experiences with earlier exchange programmes financed by AGIS and ISEC.
- To present, in the framework of the 5 year-evaluation provided for in Article 21 of the CEPOL Decision, an evaluation report of this programme to the Council.
- When continuing the exchange programme inspired by Erasmus after the four year programme period lessons learnt should be taken on board, as well as, the following elements:
- The possible complementarity of the Exchange Programme for police officers inspired by Erasmus and based on the action programme in the field of lifelong learning established by Decision 1720/2006/EC.²
 - CEPOL's management of the Exchange Programme for police officers inspired by Erasmus.

² OJ L 327, 24.11.2006, p. 45.

- The establishment of a general framework allowing for the adoption of voluntary agreements between the competent authorities responsible for police training centres in the Member States.
 - The possibility of establishing an equivalence system for the various training activities and, in this connection, existing initiatives also to apply the Bologna-related criteria in police training.
 - Existing Frontex and Customs training projects.
- To enlarge the scope of the programme to all ranked police officers and police students in accordance with any future new provisions of an amended CEPOL Decision once this amended Decision has entered into force.

INVITES THE COMMISSION:

- To examine as soon as possible and at the latest by the end of June 2012 the financial implications of a possible legislative proposal to enlarge the scope of activity of CEPOL as appropriate in order to allow this body to manage and financially support this exchange programme for police officers of all levels as well as police students and present the findings to the Governing Board of CEPOL which is invited to inform the Council thereof.
- Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 76 TFEU, to consider, based on the outcome of the above-mentioned evaluation, tabling a legislative proposal to amend the CEPOL Decision as appropriate.