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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
No. prev. doc.:	9048/2/19 REV 2
Subject:	Draft Council Conclusions on establishing a 'Heads of SPOC'-network - Adoption

1. The advantages of setting up in each Member State a 'one stop shop'-unit for international police cooperation are set out in the Manual of good practices concerning the International Police Cooperation Units at National Level¹. Acting as Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for international law enforcement cooperation, those units should work closely together to ensure efficient mutual support in cross-border cases.

¹ 7968/08

2. The A.T.H.E.N.A. project² within the information management strategy (IMS) for internal security³ is focused on a training strategy to improve and harmonise competencies of SPOC staff regarding information exchange mechanisms and instruments. Four Heads of SPOC-meetings were held in 2017-2019. These meetings acknowledged the positive experience of the periodical Heads of SIRENE-meetings, which established over the years a solid and efficient network.
3. Participants in the Head of SPOC-meetings recommended therefore that Member States should build upon that experience and establish consequently a network of Heads of SPOC as well. With this in mind, the Italian delegation within DAPIX took the initiative to define ways to strengthen the role and the visibility of the current network. To that end, the delegation invited the working party to discuss draft Council Conclusions on establishing a 'Heads of SPOC-network' for international law enforcement information exchange.
4. At its meeting of 9 September 2019, DAPIX agreed on the text of the draft Council Conclusions as set out in annex.
5. *Coreper is invited to submit the draft Council Conclusions in annex to the Council and to suggest that it adopt these Conclusions as an 'A' item on its agenda.*

² A.T.H.E.N.A.: Addressing Training to SPOC as Hub of a European Network of law enforcement Agencies, 6770/16

³ 15701/1/14 REV 1

Draft Council Conclusions
of
on establishing a
European network of Heads of SPOC
for international law enforcement information exchange

The Council of the European Union,

RECALLING the threat posed by increasingly flexible and transnational structures of organized crime that has prompted Member States to intensify the exchange and sharing of their information assets through streamlined and direct access to comprehensive and reliable data,

RECALLING the advantages of setting up in each Member State an all-in-one 'one stop shop' unit for international law enforcement cooperation as indicated in the manual of good practices concerning the International Police Cooperation Units at National Level⁴,

CONVINCED that those units for international law enforcement cooperation acting as Single Point of Contacts (SPOC) should work closely together to respond better to the demand for a more efficient and faster support in international cooperation,

AKNOWLEDGING the positive outcome of the first four meetings of the national Heads of SPOC organized within the IMS 'A.T.H.E.N.A.' project⁵ and funded by the Internal Security Fund Police (ISF1),

⁴ 7968/08

⁵ A.T.H.E.N.A.: Addressing Training to SPOC as Hub of a European Network of law enforcement Agencies

CONSCIOUS of the positive experience of the periodical 'Heads of SIRENE'-meetings, which established over the years a solid and efficient network,

CONVINCED that creating a permanent network of Heads of SPOC provides an opportunity to strengthen coordination and cooperation as well as to proceed together along these lines to support increasingly fast and effective interactions and exchanges,

CONVINCED that in order to fulfill its training related tasks SPOCs should avail of a core group of experts in charge of evaluating opportunities for training SPOC staff, proposing qualified trainers and supporting in planning the training activities for the SPOC staff,

WELCOMES the support of CEPOL in the planning of training activities for SPOC staff,

INVITES the Member States and the Schengen Associated Countries to establish a network of Heads of SPOC, which shall meet at least two times a year on invitation of the Presidency of the Council, in order to address topics such as:

- matters of common interests, such as new legal instruments, difficulties regarding workflows both on national and international level, defining best practices and sharing experience,
- assess the efficiency of the cooperation between their services,
- sharing best practices on information exchange related issues,
- raise the awareness about the specificities of the national legal framework concerning law enforcement information exchange,
- identifying possible legal and pragmatic obstacles to cross-border law enforcement cooperation and finding the most appropriate solutions to cope with them,

INVITES Member States to explore funding opportunities, including the Internal Security Fund, in order to co-finance the activities of the network,

WELCOMES in function of the agenda, the participation of the relevant EU Institutions, international agencies and or organisations and INVITES them to cooperate, where appropriate, in the activities of the network whenever their expertise and advice is required,

REQUESTS that the DAPIX working group of the Council is informed about the activities of the network on a regular basis.
