

Joint EU-U.S. statement following the EU-U.S. Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Meeting

On 17 November 2017, the EU-U.S. Ministerial Meeting on Justice and Home Affairs took place in Washington, D.C. The meeting reaffirmed the importance of the long standing partnership between the United States of America and the European Union in addressing common threats to security, and of practical outcomes of this cooperation.

The European Union was represented by the Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos, the Commissioner for the Security Union Julian King, Estonia's Minister of Justice, Mr. Urmas Reinsalu, and the Minister of Interior, Mr. Andres Anvelt on behalf of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The United States of America, hosting the meeting, was represented by U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions and by Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Elaine C. Duke.

The European Union and the United States of America discussed their shared efforts to combat terrorism. The discussion focused specifically on the importance of operational cooperation and effective information sharing. The two sides noted the importance of collecting, using, and sharing airline passenger information, including Passenger Name Record (PNR) data, to detect and disrupt threats, and discussed the state of play of the implementation of the EU PNR framework, which will be in place by May 2018. Further, the two sides discussed progress in the implementation of joint measures to address threats from terrorism to aviation security and to raise the baseline for global aviation security. The issue of U.S.-EU cooperation in combating terrorism financing and money laundering, including within the Financial Action Task Force, was also emphasised. The EU side gave an update on its rules on beneficial ownership transparency, in line with G20 conclusions.

The two sides exchanged views on action to jointly counter the misuse of the internet for terrorist purposes, in cooperation with multiple stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society. The European Union provided updates regarding increased efforts to counter the use of the internet for terrorist purposes under the umbrella of the EU Internet Forum. The European Union and the United States of America agreed on the need to jointly address cybersecurity and counter cybercrime and in this context took note of the conclusions of the 14 November EU-US Cyber Dialogue.

The two sides discussed the importance of ensuring swift cross-border access by law enforcement authorities to electronic evidence, in line with their respective legal provisions. In that respect, the two sides agreed to continue their regular dialogue, in order to update each other on legislative and judicial developments.

The European Union and the United States of America reaffirmed the need to counter the production and trafficking of cocaine and illicit opioids, including fentanyl and its analogues. Both sides noted good examples of joint EU-U.S. operations in this area, and welcomed their practical results.

The European Union and the United States of America noted the progress in cooperative discussions towards reciprocal and secure visa-free travel under their respective legal frameworks.

Underlining the progress made and the continued need to face terrorism and crime together, the European Union and the United States of America remain committed to continue common work and meet again in the first half of 2018 in Sofia, Bulgaria.