

# [Eurojust hosts Consultative Forum of top EU prosecutors](#)

## **Strengthening the fight against terrorism and migrant smuggling**

The Hague, 19 October 2018

Top prosecutors from across Europe gathered today at Eurojust in The Hague to tackle the ever-changing challenges of cross-border terrorism and migrant smuggling, share new strategies in using the [European Investigation Order](#), discuss developments in the area of e-evidence and prepare for the new Eurojust Regulation. The 13th meeting of the [Consultative Forum](#) of Prosecutors General and Directors of Public Prosecutions of the Member States of the European Union (the Consultative Forum) works towards making the cooperation between judges, investigators and prosecutors in the European Union simpler, quicker and stronger.

This year's meeting was co-hosted by Ms Asya Petrova, Deputy Prosecutor General of Bulgaria, and Ms Barbara Göth-Flemmich, Head of the International Criminal Law Department of Austria, in the context of the Bulgarian and Austrian Presidencies of the Council of the European Union. Consultative Forum members stressed the importance of comparing problems and solutions, and sharing admissible evidence, including e-evidence, to help practitioners involved in international criminal investigations deliver more and better results in less time. They also pointed out the need to promote the work of Eurojust as the EU's judicial information hub and to use judicial cooperation tools, such as the European Investigation Order (EIO), more often and more efficiently.

Ms Petrova said: *The channels used by migrants and asylum seekers to pass through Bulgaria are often also used by terrorists and human traffickers. This situation creates a major challenge for our country and requires a higher level of scrutiny and a coordinated approach at European level to identify the threats against, and be able to ensure, peace and security on the continent.*

Ms Göth-Flemmich said: *Crime does not stop at national borders. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to strengthen the cooperation between the prosecution services in the European Union and beyond. The Consultative Forum provides a key platform to discuss new developments in our common fight against transnational crime.*

Mr Ladislav Hamran, President of Eurojust, said: *At Eurojust, we serve the joint vision of justice for all our fellow European citizens. This year, Eurojust had once more the special honour and pleasure to welcome at its premises top prosecutors from all EU countries. The Consultative Forum is a unique opportunity for them to share national best practice and work more*

*closely together towards the common goal of protection, security and justice.*

### **Counter-terrorism**

Among the main topics of the Consultative Forum's meeting were developments in national legislation in the area of counter-terrorism, current challenges and lessons learned from investigations of terrorism cases, as well as the experience gained through judicial cooperation between EU Member States and third States with the support of Eurojust and Europol. Forum members looked into effective mechanisms to both prevent and combat transnational terrorism, such as the enhanced sharing of information. The conclusions of Eurojust's annual meeting on counter-terrorism for 2018 were also presented to the Forum's participants.

### **Eurojust priority areas**

This year's meeting paid special attention to Eurojust's operational activities in key crime areas, such as migrant smuggling, faster and easier access to e-evidence, with Eurojust in a coordinating role, as well as the effective implementation of the European Investigation Order (EIO), allowing for direct exchange and networking between the judicial authorities of different States. To that effect, the members of the Forum took note of the conclusions of this year's Eurojust meeting on migrant smuggling and Eurojust meeting on the EIO. The President of Eurojust also seized the opportunity to share his future vision of digital justice in the European Union, in which operational data is exchanged in an automated, structured and secure manner.

### **New Eurojust Regulation**

Forum members were informed about the EU's new judicial landscape following the reform of Eurojust, and the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO). The new Eurojust Regulation is in the final stages of the legislative procedure, awaiting formal adoption by the Council. The new Regulation will provide Eurojust with a new governance set-up and the basis for cooperation with the EPPO, and will be aligned with the EU framework on external relations and data protection. Forum members reflected on the impact of these changes and new opportunities to reinforce judicial cooperation against serious cross-border organised crime.

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## **[ASEM Summit: Europe and Asia – Global Partners for Global Challenges](#)**

Jean-Claude **Juncker**, President of the European Commission and Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, represented the European Union at the Summit. Heads of State or Government of the 28 EU Member States, Switzerland and Norway, in addition to 21 Heads of State or Government from Asian countries, as well as the Secretary General of ASEAN (the Association of

Southeast Asian Nations), were also invited. The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica **Mogherini**, and the Vice-President of the European Commission for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, Jyrki **Katainen**, also participated at the Summit.

*"We want to give our relationship with Asia, which is already very dynamic – as illustrated by the numerous trade and cooperation agreements we have, fresh impetus", [said](#) President Jean-Claude **Juncker** at the Summit's plenary session this morning. "Only a multilateral approach will enable us to confront global challenges. This is why I reiterate our commitment to support multilateral organisations in all their efforts, including the United Nations and the World Trade Organisation – a World Trade Organisation that we have to reform together, so that its rules correspond better to the new realities. It is by acting together that we will be able to preserve our planet [...], contribute to resolving conflicts, eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities, [...] and that we can better manage migration flows and develop free and fair trade."*

The full remarks of President **Juncker** at the plenary session of the ASEM Summit are available [online](#).

*"What Europe and Asia agree together matters not only for the two of us, but for the entire world. Together we represent 55% of global trade, 60% of global population, 65% of global economy and 75% of global tourism; together we represent a real global power",* said the High Representative/Vice-President, Federica **Mogherini** at the Summit's press conference. *"We come out of this two-day Summit with a reinforced global partnership between Europe and Asia. It has allowed us to translate our global weight into concrete policy initiatives – on regional and international security, foreign policy issues, climate change action, free and fair trade, and the digital agenda to name a few. Together, we can make a real difference for the world."*

High Representative/Vice-President **Mogherini**'s remarks at the press conference are available [online](#).

A [Chair's Statement](#), covering the wide range of areas discussed and focussing on ASEM's three pillars – namely political, economic and financial, and social and cultural – has also been issued.

## **Sustainable connectivity between Europe and Asia**

In his [address](#) at the Summit's plenary session, President **Juncker** highlighted the importance of investing in more sustainable connectivity between the European Union and Asia. The European Union has this week adopted a [new strategy on connecting Europe and Asia](#), building on the [proposal](#) of the European Commission and the High Representative in September. With financial, environmental, and social sustainability at the core of the EU's approach to connectivity, the EU's objective is to develop sustainable connectivity networks across the digital, transport, energy and human dimensions, as well

as to strengthen partnerships at the bilateral, regional and international levels, in particular to ensure a rules-based approach and interoperability of standards.

As a contribution to enhancing Euro-Asian connectivity, as well as to demonstrate the huge potential of the relationship, the European Commission has this week launched the [ASEM Sustainable Connectivity Portal](#), offering policymakers, researchers, businesses and other stakeholders alike a wealth of data on the political, economic and societal relationships between the two continents. A [full press release](#) and [factsheet](#) are available online. In parallel to the Summit, a number of events to bring Europeans and Asians together are taking place in Belgium, such as the [ASEM Cultural Festival](#), the [Young Leaders' Summit](#), the [Business Forum](#), the [People's Forum](#) for civil society, the [Labour Forum](#) and the [Parliamentary Partnership Meeting](#).

### **Strengthening EU-Asia bilateral ties**

In the margins of the ASEM Summit, the European Union signed a number of bilateral agreements to deepen and expand its relations with Singapore and Vietnam respectively.

President **Juncker**, President Tusk and Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz signed, together with the Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Hsien Long, the EU-Singapore **Free Trade Agreement**. In the presence of the leaders, EU High Representative/Vice-President, Federica **Mogherini** and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, Vivian Balakrishnan signed the EU-Singapore **Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation** and Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström and Mr S Iswaran, Minister for Communications and Information, and Trade Relations of Singapore signed the EU-Singapore **Investment Protection Agreement**. These agreements represent a significant step forward for a more comprehensive and mutually-beneficial relationship between the EU and Singapore, opening new opportunities for European producers, farmers, service providers and investments, as well as strengthening political and sectoral cooperation through more formal and intensive exchanges for example in environment, climate change and counter-terrorism. More information is available in a [dedicated press release](#) and on the [website](#).

The European Union is also stepping up its relations with **Vietnam**. Earlier this week, the European Commission [adopted the EU-Vietnam trade and investment agreements](#), paving the way for their signature and conclusion. The trade agreement will eliminate virtually all tariffs on goods traded between the two sides. The agreement also includes a strong, legally binding commitment to sustainable development, including the respect of human rights, labour rights, environmental protection and the fight against climate change, with an explicit reference to the Paris Agreement. Today, the EU and Vietnam signed a **Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Voluntary Partnership Agreement**. The Agreement will help improve forest governance, address illegal logging and promote trade in verified legal timber products from Vietnam to the EU, and other markets. In addition to the variety of social, economic and environmental benefits associated with better management of the forestry sector in Vietnam, the licensing will simplify business for timber traders. More information is available [online](#).

## EU-ASEAN Leaders' Meeting

Following the ASEM Summit, a Leaders' Meeting between the European Union and ASEAN took place. President Jean-Claude **Juncker** and President Donald Tusk, accompanied by EU High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** represented the European Union, whilst the Association of Southeast Asian Nations was represented by the Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong, as the country holding the ASEAN Chairmanship for 2018, the Prime Minister of Thailand, Prayut Chan-o-cha, as the country which will hold the Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2019, and the ASEAN Secretary General, Lim Jock Hoi.

*"The EU's partnership with ASEAN is founded on common interests across many areas. We share common values – in the European Union and in the founding charter of ASEAN – which need to be respected by all",* said President **Juncker** at the [opening of the Leaders' Meeting](#). *"Proof of our intense cooperation is the number of agreements with Singapore that we have just signed. These, I hope, will be the first in a long series of such agreements with ASEAN countries, and will eventually result in a region-to-region agreement."*

At the Leaders' Meeting, alongside matters of trade, connectivity and transport, leaders addressed global peace and security challenges, including climate change, non-proliferation, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – the Iran nuclear deal, counter-terrorism, maritime security and migration. They agreed to strengthen the EU-ASEAN relationship, in particular to address global challenges and to work together to reinforce the rules-based international order and multilateralism. A factsheet on EU-ASEAN relations is available [online](#).

### Further Information

[12<sup>th</sup> ASEM Summit website](#)

[12<sup>th</sup> ASEM Summit: Chair's Statement](#)

[Speech by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the plenary session of the 12<sup>th</sup> ASEM Summit](#)

[Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the press conference following the 12<sup>th</sup> ASEM Summit](#)

[ASEM Factsheet](#)

[ASEM Brochure](#)

[Connecting Europe and Asia – the EU's Strategy Factsheet](#)

[EU steps up its strategy for connecting Europe and Asia](#)

[Memo explaining the EU's approach to connecting Europe and Asia](#)

[Council Conclusions on "Connecting Europe and Asia – Building blocks for an EU Strategy"](#)

[Press release: EU and Singapore forge closer economic and political ties](#)

[Website on the EU-Singapore Free Trade and Investment Protection Agreements](#)

[Press release: Commission launches online tool to measure how well Europe and Asia are connected](#)

[Remarks by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the opening of the EU-ASEAN Leaders' Meeting](#)

[Factsheet on EU-ASEAN relations](#)

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## **Main topics and media events 22 October – 4 November 2018**

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## **Remarks by President Donald Tusk at the EU-ASEAN leaders' meeting**

### **Press contacts**

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Prime Minister Lee, Prime Minister Prayut, Secretary-General, I am delighted that despite a very busy week here in Brussels, we have found a moment to talk. As a long-standing supporter of ASEAN integration, the European Union is committed to strong relations with ASEAN.

Almost one year ago we met at the EU-ASEAN commemorative Summit and East Asia Summit in Manila to celebrate 40 years of bilateral relations. The overall geopolitical context has changed substantially since then – both in Europe and in Southeast Asia.

Today, ASEAN and the European Union have a responsibility to put all our energy, influence and power to support the rules-based international order and the multilateral trading system. We are committed to working together to counter protectionism and modernise the World Trade Organisation.

In Manila, we agreed to accelerate efforts towards a Strategic Partnership between the EU and ASEAN by strengthening all areas of dialogue and cooperation. We will use the meeting today to seek greater engagement on trade and investment, rules-based and sustainable connectivity, climate change, and more security cooperation. It is also a priority for the EU to enhance our relations further, on the basis of common interests and shared values of democracy, human rights and rule of law.

[Visit the meeting page](#) [Download as pdf](#)

[Foreign affairs & international relations](#) [Trade](#)

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## [EU and Singapore forge closer economic and political ties](#)

The agreements signed today are the EU-Singapore Trade Agreement, the EU-Singapore Investment Protection Agreement and the Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation.

President of the European Commission Jean-Claude **Juncker** said: *“The signature of the EU-Singapore agreements is another strong message by like-minded partners to defend and promote an international system that is based on rules, on cooperation, and on multilateralism. The trade agreement will open up new opportunities for European producers, workers, farmers and consumers, mirroring what this Commission has delivered with other like-minded partners*



*across the world, whilst our collective resolve to tackling global challenges will be strengthened through political dialogue.”*

Federica **Mogherini**, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, said: *“The European Union partners with Singapore not only for our growing economic links, but as a key player in the region and beyond. This Partnership and Cooperation Agreement will enable us to strengthen the joint work we are already doing, from countering climate change to tackling organised crime. Today’s significant step forward in our bilateral relations will have a positive impact on our citizens and on the regions beyond our borders.”*

Cecilia **Malmström**, Commissioner for Trade, said: *“These agreements with Singapore – our biggest trading partner in the region – are another landmark for the EU. As the first of such agreements between the EU and a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, they will open up vast new opportunities for our exporters. These deals, as all our recent ones, go beyond economic considerations and demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting human and labour rights and to protecting the environment. In this difficult period on the world stage, we need strong allies such as Singapore in order to uphold the rules-based global trade system.”*

Within the ASEAN bloc of nations, Singapore is by far the EU’s largest partner with a total bilateral trade in goods of €53.3 billion (2017) and in services of €44.4 billion (2016). Over 10,000 EU companies are established in Singapore and use it as a hub to serve the whole Pacific region. Singapore is also the number one location for European investment in Asia, with investment between the two growing rapidly in recent years: bilateral investment stocks reached €256 billion in 2016.

The trade agreement with Singapore will remove nearly all remaining tariffs on certain EU products, simplify customs procedures and set high standards and rules. It simplifies trade in goods like electronics, food products and pharmaceuticals, while stimulating green growth. It opens up the market for services like telecommunications, environmental services and engineering. It also includes a comprehensive chapter on trade and sustainable development, setting the highest standards of labour, safety, environmental and consumer protection, as well as strengthening joint actions on sustainable development and climate change.

The Investment Protection Agreement contains all aspects of the EU’s new approach to investment protection and its enforcement mechanisms. It will ensure a high level of investment protection, while safeguarding the EU’s and Singapore’s rights to regulate and pursue public policy objectives such as the protection of public health, safety and the environment.

The trade and investment agreements represent the first building block towards a future region-to-region agreement between the EU and ASEAN.

The Framework Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation, signed by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** and her counterpart, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, Vivian Balakrishnan, will allow the



EU and Singapore to strengthen political, economic and sectoral cooperation across a wide range of fields, including environment, climate change, energy, education and culture, employment and social affairs, science and technology, transport, counter terrorism and the fight against organised crime. It will enhance cooperation on global challenges, where both Singapore and the EU play an increasingly important role, and will help address them in a more coherent way. The Agreement establishes a Joint Committee, which will ensure the proper functioning and implementation of the Agreement.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Singapore is the fourth such agreement signed with an ASEAN country, following the agreements with Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam. It will supersede the current legal framework of the 1980 Cooperation Agreement between the European Economic Community and member countries of ASEAN.

### **Next steps**

The trade and investment agreements will be sent to the European Parliament for consent. The trade agreement could then enter into force before the end of the current mandate of the European Commission in 2019, while the investment protection agreement will also follow ratification procedures at Member States level. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement will need to be ratified by EU Member States and submitted to the European Parliament before it enters formally into force.

### **For More Information**

[Delegation of the European Union to Singapore](#)

[The trade and investment agreements between the EU and Singapore](#)

[Mission of the European Union to ASEAN](#)

[Factsheet on EU-ASEAN relations](#)