



**SUMMARY OF TENTH MEETING OF THE
OLAF ANTI-FRAUD COMMUNICATORS' NETWORK (OAFCN)
7-8TH December 2006, in Brussels, Belgium**

The 10th meeting of the OLAF Anti-Fraud Communicators' Network was held on 8th December 2006 in the Council of Ministers building in Brussels. The meeting was preceded by a working dinner on December 7th.

On December 8th, Alessandro Buttice, the Spokesman for OLAF and a member of the OAFCN, welcomed new members and opened the meeting.

1. Approval of the Agenda

The first order of business was the approval of the agenda. There were no suggestions so the agenda was considered approved.

2. Adoption of the Minutes and Conclusions of the 9th OAFCN meeting, Brussels, 12-13 June 2006-12-20

The minutes of the 9th meeting of the OAFCN in June 2006 were approved, with Alessandro Buttice specifying that the conclusions would be published on the OAFCN webpage.

3. The European Union Communication Challenge (Plan D)

The first presentation was made by Mr Peter Lindvald-Nielson, adviser to the Director-General of DG Comm. Mr Lindvald-Nielson talked about Plan D, the Commission's new communication plan which is aimed at addressing communications challenges within the EU, especially after the rejection of the EU Constitutional Treaty in the Netherlands and France. Mr Lindvald-Nielson demonstrated how DG Comm's Action Plan, Plan D and White Paper on Communication are aimed at promoting dialogue and debate and to listen to citizens' concerns.

4. Europe Open Day 5 May 2007 in Brussels, with involvement of the OAFCN

Alessandro Buttice talked about the next European Open Day, which will be on May 4, 2007. He introduced his colleague Gaëlle Ceytre, who will be in charge of organising the OLAF OAFCN stand at the Open Day. He called for members to participate and said that Gaëlle would send a follow-up email with more details on the Open Day.

5. National Best Practices: Germany (ZKA) and Romanian (DLAF)

Mr Tudor Chiuariu, the Head of the Fight Against Fraud Department (DLAF) in Romania, made a presentation on how DLAF has been working to monitor the distribution of EU funds and how DLAF is developing a positive relationship with the Romanian media. When asked about how DLAF responds to attacks in the media, Mr Chiuariu's colleague, Mihaela Suciu, informed the members that DLAF responds to attacks on the institution but not to individual attacks or scandal-mongering.

Alessandro informed the group about OLAF's policy of sending correction requests to the offending media source(s), with the International Federation of Journalists copied in on the request.

Next, Wolfgang Schmitz, Spokesman for the ZollKriminalamt (ZKA) in Germany made a presentation on combating the trade of counterfeit goods. He gave an example of a recent success story from Germany– the seizure and shredding of 117 containers of counterfeit trainers. The story was publicised by several OAFCN network members' services and was picked up by media representatives in several countries. Thus, this story represents the kind of cooperation members are striving to attain.

Mr Schmitz's presentation was followed by a series of informative contributions from members about how seized goods are dealt with in their respective countries.

6. Development of Relations with the International Federation of Journalism (IFJ): Training for Investigative Journalists

Next, the OAFCN welcomed Cristian Unteanu of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). Mr Unteanu spoke about the cooperation between the IFJ and OLAF and stressed that journalists need to get all the information possible from senior people in the institutions represented in the OAFCN.

The idea of the OAFCN developing an ethics training session for investigative journalists was explored. There was also discussion about developing contacts with journalism schools.

7. Possible involvement of Eurojust in the OAFCN

In accordance with the network's trend toward greater involvement, members decided invite representatives of Eurojust to participate in future OAFCN meetings.

8. Conclusions of the OAFCN Seminar in Sofia

John Powell from HM Revenue & Excise in the United Kingdom presented his summary of the Sofia OAFCN meeting on October 8-11, 2006.

9. Organisation of next meetings/seminars of the OAFCN in one of the Member States

Next on the agenda was the organisation of the next meetings/seminars of the OAFCN. The next meeting is planned for the 4th of May in Brussels. This will be organised by Gaëlle Ceytre and Ingeborg Gaspard of OLAF.

For the second meeting of 2007, Christiane Penker of the Austrian Ministry of Finance said that there has been some discussion of Austria and Slovakia hosting a joint meeting. She said that she would talk with her colleagues in Bratislava and that even if Bratislava did not want to host the meeting, Austria was still interested. She confirmed that this was a formal proposal and Alessandro asked members to provide contacts for potential speakers at the next meetings.

10. Future joint communication actions for 2007

Jörg Wojahn, Deputy Spokesman for OLAF, stressed that the OAFCN objectives for 2007 should include releasing more press releases and holding further press conferences in coordination with colleagues across the Member States, with emphasis put on publicising success stories.

In preparation for the upcoming meetings, roundtable publication and 2007 Open Day, members suggested several innovative ideas. For example, Wolfgang Schmitz of the ZKA suggested an international public information campaign to show how the services are enhancing their efficiency through international cooperation. Other suggestions included the creation of an electronic magazine for the 2007 Open Day and the creation of an online forum for the next OAFCN roundtable publication.

11. Any other business

Lastly, Maximilian Strotmann, Spokesman for Commissioner Siim Kallas thanked the OAFCN for inviting him to participate in their meeting and said that good coordination and the exchange of information with Commissioner Kallas' cabinet was key.

In conclusion, Alessandro thanked the members for their hard work and insightful contributions and wished everyone a safe journey back to their home countries.

