

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE  
of the MINISTERS of INTERIOR and MINISTERS of JUSTICE  
Belgrade, September 27-29, 2009**

**Facing the Challenges of Organized and Serious Crimes in the Western Balkans**

The perspective of Sweden, current Presidency of the Council of the European Union  
**Intervention by Counsellor Michael Carlin, Ministry of Justice, Sweden**

- Since Sweden is currently holding the Presidency of the EU Council, I would like to start with some words about the activities of the EU during our Presidency.
- At the beginning of July, the Programme of the Swedish Presidency in the field of Justice and Home Affairs' External relations was published. In the Programme, the cooperation with Western Balkans was underlined; and the following was stated:

“The Western Balkans countries will ... receive particular attention during the Swedish Presidency. The Swedish Presidency will arrange expert meetings on trafficking in weapons and explosives as a continuation of the initiatives already taken by the French and the Czech Presidencies. The Presidency will support the ongoing work of the SECI Centre and the SELEC Convention with a view to its finalisation.”
- The EU-Western Balkans Justice and Home affairs Ministerial will for obvious reasons be the most important event during our presidency. We have started the planning for this meeting in cooperation with officials of the WB countries. Issues to be discussed in the Forum will probably include:
  - ✓ Fight against corruption
  - ✓ Enhanced cooperation of WB states with Eurojust, Europol and Frontex
  - ✓ SECI Centre – Selec Convention
  - ✓ Fight against trafficking in human beings, which is a “particular high priority for the Swedish Presidency within the framework of EU cooperation with non-EU countries.”
  - ✓ Fight against trafficking in weapons
  - ✓ Possible WB action plan on explosives

We look forward to the ministerial conference held here today and tomorrow, and believe that it will help us prepare the Forum.

- Sweden is fully aware of the fact that organized crime cannot be fought at national level only. Cooperation within the EU, but also with partners beyond its borders, is absolutely necessary. The **national plan** on fight against OC takes this into account.
- In 2007-2008, a national mobilization plan against organized crime was introduced. The main background of the plan was a raising awareness that isolated law enforcement actions are not enough to counter serious crime, and that many different resources in society need to be coordinated in these efforts.
- In particular, six new fields of action were underlined:
  - ✓ The creation of a specialized permanent national anti-OC force, that can support local police when specific needs occur.
  - ✓ Further development of an intelligence led model to fight OC. The national prosecution office, the customs, the tax authorities and specialized law enforcement agencies have created a joint intelligence centre which can process all types of information.
  - ✓ A new role for the security services: to protect journalists, politicians, authorities and other persons with important functions in society from pressure and illicit influence from illegal groups.
  - ✓ Coordination of local individual prevention activities, including actions to disturb the day to day activities of organized criminals
  - ✓ Strengthening of actions to prevent recruitment of young criminals – including programmes to help young people at risk to leave or not to be drawn into organized crime groups
  - ✓ Improved rules on confiscation of criminal proceedings, and strengthened coordination of all authorities with partner countries and with relevant private sector operators.
- It should be repeated that Sweden wishes to coordinate our efforts in this area with partners both within the EU and beyond – including the Western Balkans countries.