COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 23 May 2000

8615/00

LIMITE
CIREFI 26

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS
of: CIREFI

dated: 18 April 2000

A Europol representative attended the meeting.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda set out in Telex No 1698 of 11 April 2000 was adopted, with the addition of the item mentioned under "Other business" below.

2. Preparation for the meeting with candidate countries

The Presidency advised delegations that the agenda of the joint meeting of CIREFI experts with the experts from candidate countries (see Telex No 1700 dated 11 April 2000), with Turkey and Malta participating for the first time, currently includes the following issues:

- exchange of information on illegal immigration and facilitation

The Presidency stated that it would present the situation in the EU Member States giving special attention to illegal immigration from the People's Republic of China. After this presentation, it would invite the candidate countries to describe the general situation regarding illegal immigration in their countries and, in particular illegal Chinese immigration.
- **hiding opportunities in means of transport**

It was agreed that Germany would make an audio-visual presentation of this item in the joint meeting. Following a query from the Presidency, CIREFI agreed with the distribution of 10344/99 CIREFI 41 ADD 1 and 2 (RESTREINT) and 12371/1/99 CIREFI 58 REV 1 (RESTREINT) to Turkey and Malta. The Presidency would invite Turkey and Malta to reply to the questionnaire.

- **exchange of statistical data**

The **Presidency** asked Eurostat to comment on the current state of play regarding the exchange of statistical data in the joint meeting. The **Commission representative** agreed to present this issue and reported that 9 candidate countries had already replied to the questionnaire. Replies from Lithuania and Romania have not yet been received. A new questionnaire was sent to all candidate countries and four countries (Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Slovenia) have already sent in their statistical data. However, only Latvia had replied in accordance with the new questionnaire.

- **Early-warning system**:

CIREFI agreed to distribute the revised list of contact points for the early-warning system, established by a Council resolution of 27 May 1999, to Turkey and Malta (10877/6/99 CIREFI 45 COMIX 534 REV 6 RESTREINT).

The **Commission representative** reminded delegations that the CIREFI data for February 2000 should be sent to Eurostat by the end of April 2000 at the latest.

In addition, he reported that the evaluation report of the implementation of the first phase of the Commission's Action Plan was ready and would be made available to delegations by the end of April 2000. At the next CIREFI meeting the Commission representative would present this report orally.

The **Belgian delegation** suggested inviting the candidate countries to participate in the exercise carried out by the Member States in the collection of information on existing legislation on preventing and combating illegal immigration networks (see 5579/00 CIREFI 1).
The Presidency welcomed the Belgian delegation's suggestion but preferred to finalise the collection of this information between Member States before expanding it to the candidate countries. It concluded that delegations agreed to the agenda set out in Telex 1700 of 11 April 2000.

3. **Transatlantic dialogue**

The Presidency recalled that the main agenda item of the meeting with the United States and Canada would be the illegal immigration from the People's Republic of China. It reported that the United States and Canada had only recently sent in their replies to the questionnaire and referred to the different nature of the various contributions. It stated that an informal experts meeting dealing with illegal Chinese immigration would be organised on 5 May 2000. Belgium, Germany, France, Portugal and the United Kingdom had volunteered to participate in this meeting together with the United States and Canada.

On a suggestion from the Belgian delegation, it was agreed that the agenda would also include the collection of information on existing legislation in the United States and Canada on preventing and combating illegal immigration networks.

4. **Other business**

**Informal meeting of Chief Police Officers in Lisbon (7 and 8 April 2000)**

The Presidency advised delegations that it had participated, together with representatives of the Member States, the Commission, the General Secretariat of the Council and Europol, in the above-mentioned meeting discussing the implementation of point 44 of the Tampere European Council conclusions "the establishment of a European Police Chiefs' operational Task Force to exchange, in co-operation with Europol, experience, best practices and information on current trends in cross-border crime and contribute to the planning of operative actions".
At this meeting it was decided to set up a flexible, evolving and informal structure which will serve as a forum for discussions and contributions by Chief Police Officers. In principle, one meeting per Presidency would be organised. This informal forum would, however, not substitute the institutionalised working parties of the Council of the European Union. The first meeting will take place on 14 and 15 September 2000 under the French Presidency in Paris. It could be preceded by informal experts' meetings to prepare issues dealing with public order, security and, in particular the European football championship.