

## ***Improving responses to organised crime and drug trafficking along the Cocaine Route***

### **Report of the Conference**

May 28-30, 2013

Grand Hotel Plaza, Rome, Italy

#### **1. Introduction**

The European Union, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Italy, convened 180 policy makers, practitioners and leading experts in a response to transnational organised crime, with representation from more than 40 countries, in order to critically evaluate its flagship “Cocaine Route Programme”.

Through this unique programme, the first of its kind to think strategically about confronting organised crime on the so-called Cocaine Route, the EU has committed almost €30 million over 5 years, in 36 countries under its Instrument for Stability, complemented by more substantial resources under its national and regional instruments. The programme provides support, technical advice and promotes coordination between the States along the entire route from the Andes to Europe, via the Caribbean and West Africa, to strengthen the capacity to seize drugs and other illicit commodities, to arrest and prosecute perpetrators and to build the capacity of national governments to protect their citizens from the negative impact of organised crime.

The conference comes at the mid-point of the programme, and had two main objectives. The first was to make an overall assessment about the continued relevance of the project in light of the changing programme environment, to evaluate its past performance and identify lessons learned and propose practical recommendations for strengthening the programme in the next phase. The second objective was to enhance the visibility of the programme and to build a collaborative network amongst the key stakeholders in the programme in order to build confidence, increase cooperation and information sharing across geographic and thematic programme areas.

The meeting was structured in three parts. The first day was dedicated to a high level review of the programming environment, and to understanding the true scope of the challenge today. Across the globe, organised crime and trafficking are increasingly being recognised as cross-cutting spoilers to debates around peace, development, governance, security, resource allocation and community cohesion. Along the cocaine route, from the production countries in the Andes: Bolivia, Columbia and Peru; through those countries through which it transits

on its way to Europe: states in Central America, the Caribbean, West, Southern and North Africa, the drug trade is exacerbating extreme violence, instability and is chronically weakening state institutions. While this may have been true for some time, for a number of these countries, the problem of cocaine trafficking has reached acute levels.

Drug-related gang violence, for example, is increasing in countries in Latin America, where citizens face chronic insecurity every day, with a growing culture of criminality expanding, and the state in some places paralysed by corruption and too weak to respond.

On the other side of the Atlantic, in West Africa, the impact of this illicit trade on a region already experiencing armed insurgency and international terrorism has been significant. Criminal groups are believed to have benefited from the economic rewards from cocaine trafficking using this illicit profits also to bribe and corrupt politician and civil servants. This, together with impunity, has been confirmed as one of the main scourges affecting governance and stability in the region.

Discussions on the second day were devoted to presentations on technical components of the Cocaine Route Programme that have been used thus far in response to the challenges of organised crime and cocaine trafficking, and a critical evaluation of their efficacy and an identification of key shortfalls or lessons learned which might enhance a future response. The day was also used to highlight some of the experiences from a national context, which would illustrate how the different components of the Programme fit together, and to identify any trends or inter-dependencies that should be noted for the future.

The final day introduced a new set of interlocutors from civil society, whose integration into the programming environment will be required if the Cocaine Route Programme is to be positioned to respond to the expanding governance and rule of law threat from organised crime. It also introduced the work of some critical EU partners, whose activities complement those of the Programme. The meeting concluded with a focused discussion that summarized the salient points of the previous two days, and the subsequent implications for a successful response, including a set of key recommendations aimed at decision makers in the European Commission, other EU institutions and the wider public.

While significant challenges are presented by organised crime and drug trafficking, initiatives such as this conference, which take a critical assessment of the situation, and to move key actors together toward a unified position and a coordinated response, are an important step towards combatting these threats.

## 2. Key Conclusions

The objective of the conference was to evaluate the Cocaine Route Programme and to feed into future strategy development. But it was also to build relationships and collaborations between colleagues in a shared effort.

The conference gave the collective opportunity to learn from the diverse experiences of those committed to fighting against organised crime, and awareness was raised about the Cocaine Route Programme as a whole, as well as its various components. If the conclusions of the conference can be summarized into a few key points to be fed back to EU policy-makers and strategists, what can be taken away from the three days of intense discussion is that there is much good work that has been done on different fronts and in different regions. However, in looking forward, the following nine main themes need to be taken into account:

1. **The discussion around organised crime is now situated within a nexus between peace, security and development debates.** Organised crime is emerging in new forms, utilizing new approaches, entering new markets and undermining peace, stability and development in new regions. To effectively combat the threat will require a multi-faceted response, no single approach can work. In this regard, lessons can be drawn from other sectors, including in development and the fight against corruption or income inequality, or from the coordinated counter-terrorism strategy.
2. **The need to explicitly address corruption and impunity.** The efficacy of the response is being undermined by corruption, which now extends to the highest levels of government, the state and the private sector, and permeates down through all levels of state institutions and societal fabric. There must be a clear and visible end to impunity for crime and trafficking, and the discussion proposed some ways this could be achieved. What was emphasised, however, is that while international action can be catalytic, the real onus on ending impunity should be ended at home, with domestic capacity built within the framework of the rule of law.
3. **Enhancing the collecting understanding about the extent of organised crime, and using that information more strategically.** The need for information, information sharing and the capacity for informed analysis to drive proactive responses was reiterated in almost every context of the debate. Globally there is a need for a big picture understanding of organised crime trends, flows and a profile of networks and groups. This is also required on a regional and national level, so that the political economy of the environment can be understood. Furthermore, this has to be live, continuous data, not static point in time analysis, so that there can be a shift from reactive to proactive interventions.
4. **Institutional capacity need to be built and integrity reinforced.** Challenging organised crime is in many ways a specialized business, and accordingly, at a national level, tailored and specialized capacity building is required. Corruption has infiltrated to the highest levels, and there is temptation across the board. So in all of our actions, there is a need to demonstrate integrity and to ensure that responses remain appropriate and legitimate. It may be a war, but it must be fought cleanly. This is not just in law enforcement, but

across a range of components. An independent media, for example, is a critical tool in investigating organised crime and mobilizing a response, yet there is very little to support this capacity.

5. **Technology and the use of technology is a double edged sword.** There are challenges and opportunities presented by technology, but while modern communications and information management technology can offer extraordinary benefit, the use of technology must be context and capacity appropriate.
6. **There is need to build space for debate.** As organised crime expands in its scope and impact into new domains and engages new stakeholders, the importance of allowing discussion, debate, the sharing of ideas and experiences and offering the opportunity for collective prioritization and policy setting is critical. The Latin American Commission on Drugs and the West African Commission on Drugs are important initiatives in this regard as they are regionally owned and led, and the international community should support them. There is, however, still room to create new forums. The debates raised briefly in the context of this conference are very topical, with many big issues, including, for example, the relationship between organised crime and governance; organised crime and terrorism; organised crime and violence, drugs or small arms trafficking.
7. **Organised crime is a business, follow the money and hit them where it hurts most.** Money laundering, asset seizure and financial analyses are a specialised field that is developing. While it is not immediately bearing fruit to the scale sought, it needs to be continuously reinforced. Furthermore, there needs to be sufficient momentum to tackle the biggest fish in the game, and to investigate the most senior officials in government where relevant. Issues such as this emphasise why civil society and integrity matter so much, as they are critical to ending a culture of impunity.
8. **Engage civil society, academia, the private sector and the media.** Non-traditional interlocutors have the capacity to build resilience among community groups, and support efforts on transparency and accountability. However, strategies to engage with them have to be relevant to the local context, as in many cases people rely on organised crime and its collateral industries as a livelihood where few other alternatives to exist, so interventions must be predicated on a clear understanding of the political economy and the context at the local level.
9. **The need for information sharing, cooperation, collaboration and shared responsibility.** Collectively we need to achieve synergies across international, regional and national efforts. While much good work is being done, it is fragmented and uncoordinated and thus not having the impact it should. Creating a foundation of trust

upon which to build long term collaborative and cooperative operational responses will be critical in the way forward.

In conclusion, the conference came to a shared understanding that the nature of the problem is different and that the impact is different, most notably in the way that organised crime drug trafficking is decimating communities and increasingly becoming a governance problem rather than a crime, security or health problem.

In direct response to the points made on the need for a more holistic response to the challenge of organised crime and drug trafficking, the EU, through the Instrument for Stability, announced its intention to make an additional €10 million available to to strengthen the capacity for prosecution and judicial cooperation and integrity to complement existing and future EU actions under national and geographical support instruments.

There is a clear leadership role that the EU can play in strengthening international initiatives promoting alignment, coordination and coherence, and reinforcing national ownership and capacity. The first, and perhaps the most important step has been taken via this conference, and now this momentum must be maintained.

### 3. Overview of Discussions

#### ***Day 1: Organised Crime and Drug Trafficking Along the Cocaine Route in a Changing Context***

The welcoming addresses emphasised the growing threat that organised crime in general, and cocaine trafficking in particular, has become in Europe. A significant proportion of the cocaine produced globally is now destined for Europe, where consumption has doubled in less than 10 years. An estimated 4.2 million people consume more than 124 tonnes of the recreational drug per year in the EU Member States. The negative effects of cocaine consumption are affecting a greater number of citizens, across regions, communities, cultures and generations.

Advances in communications technology and other globalisation trends have made criminal groups even more ingenious and virile. Production routes and innovations in criminal markets move effortlessly across national borders to exploit new opportunities. Ambassador Sandro De Bernadin, Director General for Public Affairs and Security within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy, observed that the problem of organised crime cannot be ignored by any state, for *“A plague which is affecting our neighbour today will devastate us tomorrow”*. Drug-related gang violence contributes to instability in all countries along the route. Citizens of these countries face chronic insecurity every day, with a growing culture of criminality expanding, and the state in some places is paralysed by corruption and too weak to respond.

Combating organised crime cannot be done in isolation. Not only will states need to engage in greater cooperation and information sharing, but a more holistic strategy is required which



incorporates sustainable development strategies and makes the linkages between governance, the rule of law and development with the traditional security sector interventions. Kristian Schmidt, Director of Human and Society Development at EuropeAid, European Commission appealed to the conference participants to be both critical and innovative in their discussions, as: *"The answer to organised crime is both simple and demanding. We must anticipate new challenges and seek innovative responses - we cannot respond with current strategies"*.

The conference presented a rare opportunity to bring government representatives and practitioners together from four continents usually treated independently, to work together to craft a new and integrated response. This is critical, as the capacity to galvanise political will, create collaborative networks, and to share responsibility will be key to a successful response. As the keynote speech by H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, the former President of Nigeria and Chairman of the West Africa Commission on Drugs emphasised *"West Africans have to recognise that this is a problem for our region and not only for Europeans and Americas. West Africa's political leadership has therefore to galvanise the will and determination to tackle drug trafficking and its consequences"*.

Obasanjo described the growing harm being caused by increasing drug demand and drug dependency. In doing so, he advocated for the problems of drug trafficking to be viewed from more than just a security lens, but also to take into account the need for governance and development interventions, including those on public health, and to focus on harm reduction.

#### *Session 1: Organised Crime and Drug Trafficking: a peace, security and development challenge*

The first formal session of the day echoed many of the themes introduced in the opening remarks. The goal of the session had been to paint a picture of the changing nature of the environment, and to discuss the way it is impacting in various sectors. Michèle Ramis, the Ambassador of France on Organised Crime, highlighted the way that criminal economies along the cocaine route are serving as a *"long path that connects us all and forces us to act together"*. The interplay between criminal groups and areas of instability and weak governance has created a huge international threat, including political instability, violence and terrorism. She spoke to the need to move away from a perspective of crime control, and towards addressing the conditions that enable organised crime to flourish. This would include more effective public policies that enhance education, and promote a reinvestment in urban areas where crime and victimization are at their highest. Luca Maestripieri, Deputy Director for Cooperation and Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy, similarly emphasised the need for institutional strengthening, particularly in the justice system and to prioritise the protection of vulnerable and marginalised groups. The need to end the perceived impunity for transnational organised crime and trafficking is critical for a successful response.

Carmen Masías Claux, Executive President of the "Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo y Vida sin Drogas" (DEVIDA), Perú, highlighted the importance of recognising and better

understanding the relationship between supply control and development. Peru is a production country that produces the raw materials of cocaine production. It has in the region of 62,000 hectares producing the cocoa plant and an estimated 2.5 million hectares of Amazonian rainforest have been deforested for coca cultivation. The cocaine trade offers a livelihood for many in the country, which results in communities orientating themselves around protecting the trade, despite the fact that it increases the vulnerability of these communities considerably. For example, there has been a trend reporting in the growing intersection between the cocaine trade and human trafficking, as women are recruited as mules. This being the case, it is critically important to involve and engage local communities, for it is only with their support that it will be possible to achieve long lasting results. Ms. Claux's example raised another theme that arose repeatedly in the first day, which is that criminal activities accumulate and spread to new markets -- trafficking in arms, in people or in other criminal flows -- creating new threats. Corruption, in particular, is an insidious by-product of organised criminal behaviour that is penetrating all aspects of the state and society. Sonia Alfano, Chair of the newly convened Special Committee on Organised Crime, Corruption and Money Laundering at the European Parliament reported that a recent study by the Committee estimated that an estimated €120 billion is lost to corruption each year within the Eurozone alone.

The discussion that followed the presentations raised a number of challenges. In particular, the need to recognise and engage the new actors that will need to be brought into the fold will require changing existing paradigms of international cooperation in particular the North-South divide, and to re-conceptualising the relationship between production, transit and demand region, and finally to breaking down institutional silos between security and development actors, a theme that would be returned to in the last session of the day.

### Session 2: Assessing the scope of the challenge

The second session of the day explored the challenges in understanding and measuring the scope of the threat presented by organised crime and trafficking. Current estimates place the value of the cocaine route from the Andes to Europe in the billions of dollars, but it is universally acknowledged that data and knowledge about trafficking routes and key actors are far from comprehensive, and often do not permit proactive and strategic responses. Speakers in this session explored questions regarding the primary gaps in data and analysis, and how the knowledge base that underpins responses could be improved.

The session opened with a presentation by Dennis Shepard, Deputy Director, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Directorate, SOUTHCOM, one of the United States Department of Defence outposts focused on intelligence gathering for Central and South America and the Caribbean. The presentation provided the opportunity to demonstrate from a national perspective how information gathering and analysis can translate directly into an operational response. SOUTHCOM's focus is on demand reduction, interdiction and reducing the flows of illicit funding. Shepard described the challenge as "*squeezing a balloon*

– as governments apply pressure in one area, the transnational organised crime groups expand into another”. Not only does SOUTHCOM witness a shift in geographic areas of activity, but also in production techniques from concentrated to dispersed, and in the structure of groups, which are increasingly focused functionally rather than geographically. All of these trends create considerable challenges for those engaged in a response.

Presentations by Angela Me, Chief of the Research and Trend Analysis Branch of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and Michael Rauschenbach, Head of Serious and Organised Crime at EUROPOL both presented their organisational perspectives of status of organised crime and cocaine trafficking along the route from Andes to Europe. The major findings of their work can be found in the World Drug Report 2013, and the EUROPOL Organised Crime Threat Assessment (OCTA) 2013. The collective picture painted by these two studies is that organised crime is a threat growing in complexity and harm.

By far the most potent of these threats is drug trafficking. Rausenbach noted that the drugs market is highly competitive and trafficking routes are continuously diversifying. While cocaine and heroin remain the dominant markets poly-drug trafficking is now a common modus operandi among criminal groups. Organised crime groups are characterized by high innovation and capacity to diversify. More than 70 new psycho-active substances were detected in 2012, increasingly sophisticated trafficking and concealment methods are being employed and there is a consistent increase in the number of entry points into the EU. Organised crime groups are growing in number and heterogeneity. There are an estimated 3,600 organised crime groups active in Europe, and they are increasingly multi-ethnic, network style alliances rather than the traditional model of an organised crime group.

Specific to the cocaine trade, the UNODC drug surveys found that while cocoa production is probably declining in absolute terms, the efficiency of production and trafficking has improved significantly, which has ensured that availability remains high. Much of what is known is derived from seizure data, of which the vast majority takes place at source, a small portion in transit – predominantly in West Africa – and the remaining at entry into destination markets in Europe, across North America, and increasingly a marked trend towards Asia and this has opened up the possibility for new transit states. It also confirmed the existence of a relatively new route going to Europe through the Balkans. Over the last ten years the pattern of demand for cocaine has shifted dramatically, from a market dominated by North America to now, where US and Europe have close to equal levels of demand, an estimated 125 tonnes per year with a retail value of US\$33 billion. 62% of this value is laundered into legitimate economic markets across the world.

Nevertheless, both speakers emphasised that there is considerable information missing. Due to its illicit nature, drug related crimes are seldom reported, so little is known about the quantities of drugs used and typology of users. Total production figures remain opaque, as are substances trafficked, or the links between drugs and arms trafficking and the impact of drug market changes in organised crime activities. Very much in response to the lack of



quantitative data available for a nuanced understanding of the challenge, Ernesto Savona, Director of Transcrime, an Italian research institute that has studied the behaviour of organised criminal groups, their business models and the macroeconomic impact for more than two decades, proposed an analytical approach that takes both a macro and a micro perspective. The macro analysis presented by EUROPOL and UNODC can be complimented by a “zooming in” on opportunities, vulnerabilities, facilitators, enablers that are specific to one sub-region or even one community. Rather than using data at a national level, a micro approach would provide a holistic perspective that is contextually relevant, which in turn allows strategies of response to be designed that are challenge specific, and avoids a blanket response which has been proven already to be ineffective.

### Session 3: Strengthening Regional Political Responses

The final session of the day picked up smoothly where the previous panel had concluded, as it spoke to the need to strengthen regional political responses. The opening presentation by Francis Forbes, Executive Director, Implementation Agency for Crime and Security, CARICOM, emphasised that Caribbean states are particularly cognizant of both their geographic vulnerability as small island states in a large maritime region and their limited capacity to respond individually, which demands that they work in a coordinated fashion. The Caribbean is also facing an increasing diversity of transnational organised crime, from illicit trafficking in drugs, small arms and people; the theft of scrap and precious metal; cybercrime, and illicit trade in goods and services. Jamaica and Bahamas are the main transit countries for illicit trafficking while the main markets are in Costa Rica, Panama and Venezuela. Mr. Forbes noted that the most pressing challenge, however, was the widespread corruption caused by the drug trade, which “*placed a whole new dimension on the extent of the problem, and if current trends continue the future of effective law enforcement, an unprejudiced public sector administration, and even the integrity of the judiciary will be threatened*”. If this paradigm is to change, then the countries of the Caribbean will need support to build and standardise a legislative architecture and capacity of the judicial system to prevent impunity and prosecute crimes. They will need to enhance their collaboration, cooperation and coordination, both at the policy and operational levels, with sufficient capacity to implement a consolidated strategic response and achieve synergies among all participants.

Jane Ong’olo, Programme Manager for the AU Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime, at the African Union picked up many similar themes in her presentation. For the latest AU Plan to be successful, they have recognised that capacity building of the individual member states is a priority: a needs assessment was undertaken and a prioritised matrix of needs for the 35 AU member states is being developed so that they can work on an even platform of cooperation.

In his presentation, Jorge Chabat, Professor at the Division of International Studies (DEI) of the Centre for Research and Teaching in Economics (CIDE) in Mexico focused predominantly on this question of international cooperation, which, despite the numerous

structures created to facilitate and coordinate regionally and internationally, still faces serious obstacles. In particular, he cited six. First, the “*balloon effect*” – that due to displacement, success in addressing trafficking and illicit activities in one country implies the failure in another. Second, there is a lack of precise and measurable goals. Third, the existence of national resistance, and the fact that some national governments see international cooperation as a threat to their sovereignty, is a challenge. Forth, there is mistrust between states produced by cultural difference, historical conflicts and corruption in the partner country. Fifth, there are asymmetric capabilities between the partners, particularly in respect of institutional strength and different organised crime challenges. Last, and most damagingly, the prevalence of corruption undermines credible efforts in many environments.. From his experience, Chabat proposed that future responses in regional or international cooperation will need to be predicated on an accurate diagnosis of every country, and the definition of realistic and holistic goals. In the cases where there are weak institutions, cooperation should focus on institution building before moving on to other stages of cooperation, and should focus on surveillance mechanisms, vetting processes and strengthening institutional structures. Finally, cooperation should concentrate on the parts of the state that are not corrupt: the model of Sensitive Investigative Units (SIU) developed by the U.S. with some Latin American countries can be fruitful in this regard.

Ms. Ong’olo described Africa as being at the “*defining moment in the fight against drug trafficking*”. While the continent has been long seized with the threat, the latest AU Plan of Action for 2013-17 recognises a number of emerging issues, including that Africa is increasingly not only a transit point, but also a consumer region for drugs. The Plan is increasingly exploring the relationship between drug trafficking and issues social impact, armed conflict and insecurity, and democratisation and governance. The need to approach the topic holistically has been well recognised: unprecedented levels of linkages are being made between this plan, and the AU corruption strategy, as well as on issues of maritime security, small arms, terrorism and on social development more broadly.

One of the regions of Africa where trafficking in drugs and illicit trade has had the greatest impact has been in the Sahel. Margaret Carey, Chief of Staff, Office of the United Nations Special Envoy to the Sahel acknowledged the role played by illicit trafficking as a root cause of instability in the Sahel region. She observed that the international community has a tendency to become diverted with crises, without looking at the long term regional factors that underlie the crisis in the first place. In the Sahel, the Special Envoy has placed economic development at the foundation of his approach, combined with an integrated and coordinated process of consultation and cooperation to ensure full-buy in and ownership of the solution. The strategy therefore involves 4 levels of coordination, bringing key stakeholders, including civil society and community actors, together in trying to prioritise and kick start a process of economic growth in areas most vulnerable to threat of crime, terror and instability.

In keeping with many of the presentations of the day, Ms. Ong'olo noted that the goal of the AU Plan is to move away from just law enforcement training, but to look at the skills and capacities that will be required to have an impact – data collection and analysis is one such universal priority. There is great political will behind this plan, and AU member states have recognised the considerable harm that is being wrought on both citizen and state security because of drug trafficking, organised crime and illicit trade. On this last point, Chabat noted that controlling corruption must be the first priority of international collaboration, as all other efforts developed will not be effective – for example, efforts to build the capacity of law enforcement are subverted by corruption, as *“If there is something worse than a corrupt and ill-equipped police; it is surely a corrupt and well-equipped police...”*.

At the conclusion of the first day, through the presentations and discussions, four main themes emerged.

- The first is that the landscape in which the Cocaine Route Programme is operating has clearly changed. There is now a nexus of political, security and development concerns that have complicated the issue and ensure that no single sector can expect to respond successfully to the challenges presented. Future interventions will require sustained action, greater coordination, innovation and proactivity.
- The second area of debate centred around the issues of corruption and impunity, which are perceived to be some of the most detrimental impacts of organised crime and trafficking and the hardest to address.
- The third dimension of debate was around the need and capacity to identify new vulnerabilities and trends. Three, in particular, were mentioned: new transit patterns and trafficking routes; drug consumption and demand trends in Africa; and growing demand in Asia. It is clear that while there is a lot of information, it is still quite fragmented, and there is no systematic capacity to bring together data, analysis and response.
- The fourth issue that was raised repeatedly was the weakness in institutional capacity and coordination in critical areas, which also ties into questions of political will – most notably the governance and justice system in some key countries. Cross border coordination requires national capacity, as efforts at coordination without the capacity to follow through will just tie people into unnecessary bureaucracy without a tangible outcome. The presentations by the regional representatives highlighted that building capacity is a long term process, and there remains insufficient forums for inter-regional coordination.

## ***Day 2: Organised Crime and Drug Trafficking: Evaluating Strategies and Responses***

Discussions on the second day were intended to evaluate the technical components of the Cocaine Route Programme and to continue to highlight some specific experiences from a national context that illustrate in context how the different components of the Programme fit

together. Speakers, who were predominantly the project managers of the various components of the Cocaine Route Programme, were asked to critically evaluate their projects, and to provide tangible recommendations on the areas that would need strengthening for the future.

#### Session 4: National Perspectives and Emerging Challenges

As a transition from the discussions of the previous day, Session 4 moved from the macro and regional perspective, to a focus on the dynamics and challenges in individual countries and the way that they have crafted a response. The cases offered some interesting similarities, contrasts, as well as an initial examination of lessons learned and emerging opportunities.

One theme consistent across all of the national presentations was the extent to which organised crime and trafficking is causing real harm to human security and the state. Manuel Moreno, Vice-Minister of Public Security, Panama, went so far as to describe organised crime as “*the main threat to public security*”. All of the presenters commented on how diverse and innovative the tactics and strategies of the organised crime groups are, and the challenge that this presents for law enforcement. It was noted by both Moreno and by Brigadier Ebrahim Kadwa, Acting Head, Organised Crime Investigation in the South African Police Service, South Africa that to ensure the efficacy of the law enforcement response, police units need to be well resourced, properly paid and well trained. They need good quality, accurate and timely information, the capacity for analysis and regular monitoring. These police officers will stand on the front line as far as corruption is concerned, and thus need to be empowered to maintain their integrity and efficacy. Kadwa further emphasised that a holistic criminal justice strategy is needed which goes beyond just investigation but ensures that there is capacity for successful prosecution and adjudication of cases related to organised crime and drug trafficking.

The presentation of Andrea De Gennaro, Director-General, Central Directorate for Anti-Drugs Service, Ministry of Interior, Italy noted the degree to which organised crime is evolving in shape, form and structure. Italy has a long history and great experience in tackling organised crime, and their criminal groups are long entrenched and defined aspects of Italy’s political, economic and cultural life. Italy, with its geographic location and multiple seaports, is one of the primary gateways to Europe for illicit trafficking and trade. It thus serves as a pivotal gatekeeper in the transit route, and a source of important information on drug trafficking trades and trends.

The final presentation by Daniela Palma Rodríguez, Chief of Area of Controlled Chemical Substances, Under-Secretariat of Interior, Ministry of Interior and Public Security, Chile presented the unique perspective of a production country, for which dealing with the issue of chemical precursors is a major challenge not faced by countries further down the route. The issue of precursors is complex, as they sit in a grey area between licit and illicit trade, and as to provide effective regulation requires the engagement of a new set of interlocutors from the private sector.

While in the previous day, the presentations had spoken to the need enhance cooperation, the national presentations gave very tangible examples of this. With the all-pervasiveness of the impact of organised crime on security, economic and social development and stability, all four countries: Italy, South Africa, Panama and Chile, were compelled to create dedicated, multi-sectoral task forces or coordination units that would work across institutional lines. Furthermore, De Gennaro emphasised, individual nations cannot be expected to solve the problem of drug trafficking and organised crime alone, given the scope and the dimensions of globalisation, and shared responsibility with countries along the route will be key. However, to achieve shared responsibility is no easy task. Sharing of information is a first step, followed by sharing of experiences and lessons learned, and then finally cooperation in joint action in investigation. An extensive network of liaison officers and cooperative agreements with other countries are required along the route as elements of a successful interdiction strategy.

#### Session 5: Interrupting the Flow: Effective Law Enforcement

The first of the technical sessions, focused on the law enforcement response, recognised the dominant themes of the previous session – that strengthening the capacity for effective law enforcement and judicial prosecution still remains central to interrupting the cocaine route and stopping organised crime. The goal of this session was to examine how well the Cocaine Route Programme components are addressing issues of regional and trans-regional cooperation and to propose ways to further improve the response, in particular looking at how to ensure sustainable national capacity.

The goal of these components of the Cocaine Route Programme is to serve as a bulwark against threats from organised crime and drug trafficking by air, land and sea. The International Coordinator of AIRCOP Marc Vanhulle, presented the framework of his project, whose primary objective is to build drug interdiction capacities (Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces - JAITFs) at selected international airports in West Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and connect these to international law enforcement databases for the proper sharing of information for global interdiction capacity. Timothy Manhire, Team Leader of SEACOP similarly presented his project, which has the objective to strengthen the cooperation in countering maritime trafficking and supporting capacity building in the fight against international criminal networks in West Africa. For both projects, the EU builds the capacity of national units within airports and seaports through the provision of equipment, training and capacity building of national law enforcement officers, sensitisation of relevant stakeholders within the national context, and supporting and facilitating international cooperation. The equipment needs of the police forces and border controls in the region are required to be increasingly sophisticated, as criminal groups employ cutting edge communications and transportation technology to traffic goods.

The PRELAC project strengthens the capacity of national administrative control authorities in Latin America and the Caribbean to prevent the diversion of precursors, and works to



facilitate the cooperation and information exchange between countries. Much as Daniela Palma Rodríguez had described in the previous session, Flavio Mirella, Team Leader of PRELAC highlighted the challenges of creating a legal and regulatory framework that would enable licit activities and create barriers to the diversion into illicit markets. However, despite the differing nature of the project, many of the shortcomings to the project were the same as those described by his colleagues in the other projects – the need to build effective legal and regulatory frameworks; the challenges to building capacity effectively; the high turnover of national counterparts, and the need for broad awareness raising and sensitisation of the challenges in a multi-sectoral environment.

The quality of information and the capacity for international cooperation in information sharing was highlighted by all as a weakness and challenge to the efficacy of their projects. Seizures are important, but are not currently at the scope or scale to really affect the business model. Interdiction orientated responses tend to only pick off the little fish – to get the big fish, better information would be needed to allow a proactive strategy that would strike at the heart of criminal groups. Andres Perez Lopez, Head of the International Relations Service, International Centre Against Organised Crime (CICO) described the work carried out under the COPOLAD project funded by the EU Development Cooperation Instrument, which is intended to bridge precisely this divide by encouraging and facilitating bi-regional dialogue between Latin America and the European Union needed to promote effective cooperation in the field of drug policy. Beyond information and cooperation, COPOLAD also seeks to strengthening capacity and encourage the process of development of coherent drug policies in Latin American countries. The project has been quite effective in building cooperative relationships at the policy level, and facilitating information sharing, lessons learned and creating the basis for informed policy development.

An inherent challenge raised by all presenters in addressing the issue of interdiction is the need to provide comprehensive coverage, or to pick up a theme raised in the first day, the challenge of displacement and the balloon effect. Strengthening interdiction capacity in only some of the land, sea or air entry points merely displaces routes onto other entry points. Thus, at the present time, the major constraint is not the level or quality of services delivered at any one individual airport, seaport, or even in one country, but that there remain very many weak spots along the route. Another broad challenge to the efficacy of all of the projects was the tendency to focus on law enforcement without looking further up the criminal justice chain, and ensuring that the capacity for prosecutions and detentions also exists.

#### Session 6: Money Laundering

Many of the discussions in the conference were cognisant of the fact that organised crime and trafficking are businesses, and that the primary goal of criminal groups is profit. Therefore, closing the routes that allow the illicit profits of the cocaine trade to enter the formal economy is an important strategy to reduce viability of the business model. Efforts thus far have seen some successes, but there is still much that can be done to improve current

approaches to tracing financial flows from organised crime, preventing money laundering, reducing corruption, and promoting asset seizure. The goal of this session was to reflect on what can be done to improve responses in this area.

The Cocaine Route Programme supports two separate initiatives intended to reinforce national and regional capacity to fight money laundering: the GAFISUD project which supports the 13 member countries of the Latin American organisation GAFISUD (Financial Action Task Force of South America) and the Anti-Money Laundering/West Africa (AML/WA) project which works in four countries in West Africa. These projects work to enhance international cooperation, strengthen national capacity for administrative, investigation and prosecution capacities to fight money laundering, and to reinforce the capacity of Financial Intelligence Units and law enforcement agencies. The environment in which these programmes work is fraught with challenges. Fundamentally, investigators and prosecutors are constantly on the back foot, trying to proactively anticipate and pre-empt the moves of criminals. They are confined to employ only legal and legitimate means to investigate a threat with no regard for the rules.

For West Africa, Mu'Azu Umaru, Director of Research and Planning at GIABA, the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, the ECOWAS institution responsible for facilitating the adoption and implementation of Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (CFT) in the region, noted the multitude of factors that enable money laundering – predominantly cash based economies with dominant informal sectors; large diaspora communities that are using unofficial remittance transfers; significant levels of corruption in all state institutions, and in many parts, protracted conflicts and insecurity. Given the paucity of legitimate economic livelihoods, organised crime, trafficking and the facilitation of money laundering is often considered a viable business in some communities which gives it legitimacy and ownership in the eyes of the community which will orientate around protecting illicit trades. Janice McClean, Team Leader, AML/WA, who had consistently urged participants at the conference to see that “*Organised crime is a business*” and that our responses need to “*hit them where it hurts*” used her presentation to bring a new dimension to the debate: the need to create a general level of awareness around money laundering and its multiple uses such as economic power, investments in legal and illegal sectors, bribery and particularly the promotion of corruption to ensure the complicity of local institutions. Much of her work focuses on laundering through the non-financial sector, and thus her watchdogs are often the general public and the need to create an environment in which there is zero tolerance for illicit funding to be used. While this is by no means easy, she shared some successes in raising public awareness at key locations.

All of the presentations noted the general lack of capacity in the programme countries to handle complex money laundering cases, and that the concept is not well known or well understood. Even for GAFISUD, which has been in place for more than a decade, Ricardo

Gil the Project Director, acknowledges that the project struggles to maintain an acceptable quality of overall system performance. Turnover of staff and the complexity of the issue make it challenging to build credible institutions. This is further an area which again relies very heavily on international cooperation, with all of the complexities that this entails that have been well documented in earlier sessions. Fabrizio Lisi, International Police Cooperation Service, Ministry of Interior, Italy, who stood at the other end of the international cooperation dialogue, acknowledged that the lack of coherent and consistent financial and legal frameworks across the countries in the regions creates a challenge for successful international cooperation. The framework is often not in place to allow financial flows to be traced, money laundering to be stopped and for assets to be seized. Safe havens remain in all regions along the route which protect and facilitate international trade. Furthermore, the lack of integrity of some countries in question due to corruption unfortunately also acts as a further barrier and disincentive to cooperation and prevents a more effective response.

#### Session 7: Information Sharing

The previous session transitioned smoothly into the objective of the final session of Day 2, which was to explore the modalities for information sharing between all regions, within the regions and internationally. This issue has been identified repeatedly as being crucial for any efforts to suppress cocaine trafficking and organised crime.

George Lovell, the CEO of National Security in Belize, opened the panel with a presentation focused on the security threats that drug trafficking and other forms of organised crime present to the small state. He emphasised that intelligence is key to successful interdiction, but having the right mix of skilled and committed individuals with outstanding integrity is also required. Lovell also emphasised the need for a holistic criminal justice capacity to intercept, interdict and convict traffickers, and if those are not in place then “*all other efforts are an exercise in futility*”. Finally, however, in his concluding remarks, Mr. Lovell offered the pertinent reminder that without alternatives in the licit economy, and the establishment of state capacity to achieve basic service delivery to its people, criminal activity will continue to have legitimacy and an attraction with citizens. Therefore the law enforcement response must be coupled with a development strategy if systemic change and community resilience to criminal behaviour is to be seen.

The presentations that followed, on WAPIS and AMERIPOL, described two integral parts of the strategy of the Cocaine Route Programme, designed to enhance cooperation, coordination and information sharing amongst law enforcement. WAPIS creates a regional police information system in the 15 ECOWAS countries plus Mauritania to collect, centralise, share and analyse crucial police information relating to crime, serious organised crime and drugs trafficking. AMERIPOL has similar goals, to improve prosecutors and law enforcement agencies’ capability to carry out complex investigations and to strengthen the exchange of information and intelligence at both regional and trans-regional levels. AMERIPOL seeks to

function for South America as EUROPOL does for Europe. In both cases, the projects provide a connection for regional data and intelligence to be channelled to international institutions such as INTERPOL, and to enhance international cooperation.

WAPIS, the programme for West Africa, has only recently completed its design phase, and will commence implementation in the near future. Philippe Baeten, the Team Leader of the project, observed that while communications technology in this area is well advanced, and there are many highly sophisticated data management, analysis and tracking capabilities, it has been critically important to ensure that *“High ambition for an historic project that itself has to start with basic data and a “simple” technical concept”*, i.e. that the solutions offered for the countries in the region are appropriate to the level of capacity and infrastructure in the region or else it will not be effective. AMERIPOL is further along in the process of implementation, with offices having been established in six locations. In this regard, Marcos Alvar Bestilleiro the Team Leader of the project emphasised the need for standardisation and consistency of approach at a national level. Information and coordination systems need to function together, and so systems must be compatible and staff and teams be integrated from the start, such that they feel conceptually like they are part of one programme and one initiative. Considerable effort has been made on the part of AMERIPOL team to ensure this horizontal integration.

This theme of integration and the need to have disparate offices and components feel like they are part of one programme was exactly the rationale for the creation of the CORMS project. CORMS is a structure internal to the Cocaine Route Programme, whose overall objective is to increase internal and external coherence of the different components of the Programme, and to ensure better coordination of field initiatives. The key feature of the Cocaine Route Programme was its approach of following the cocaine flow from source to destination – a unique effort which requires coordination across different regions. More broadly than that, CORMS was designed with cognisance of the fact that the Cocaine Route Programme is just one initiative amongst a much larger set of activities by the EU and the individual EU Member States, and thus CORMS has a role in monitoring and to facilitate the information sharing between the EU and similar initiatives of other international or regional organization in order to reduce duplication.

Marco Alma, Team Leader of the CORMS project described some of the tools that have been put in place to enhance information sharing and the sense of ownership and team identity across the Cocaine Route Programme, which has been quite successful. Looking forward however, the next step to improving the overall efficacy of the Programme in outreach and awareness raising on multiple fronts: with the partner countries to enhance their ownership and engagement, with EU member states working in the area, and at the EU level between headquarters and the EU Delegations.

In summary, Day 2 concluded on a reflective note, with serious consideration to how the EU and the international, regional and national stakeholders more broadly could make

interventions against organised crime and drug trafficking more effective. In particular, the day offered the following concepts:

- Reiterated from the previous day, the need to move beyond law enforcement to a more holistic approach; the need for coordination, cooperation and information at all levels and the challenges this presents.
- The need for political will and ownership that is crucial to success, and the extent to which this is undermined by corruption and the sense of impunity for criminal acts.
- New concerns, regarding the paucity and inconsistency of capacity, legal frameworks and application of programmes were raised.
- The need to expand the programme in multiple ways to become a broader criminal justice programme, and to engage on issues of economic development and social engagement.
- The importance of utilising the tools available in a context-appropriate manner, benefitting from technology but not being overly reliant on technological solutions that do not work with national capacity and infrastructure was an important issue.
- Finally, across the board, the presentations and debate on Day 2 spoke to the real challenges of building national capacity, and thus the need for sustained engagement over the long-term if real change is ever to be achieved.

### ***Day 3: New Responses: Strategy Setting and Mitigating Impact***

The goals of the final day of the conference were to consolidate all the inputs of the previous two days, and to look forward tangibly on the next phase of the Cocaine Route Programme. This will consist of anticipating new challenges, seeking innovative options for addressing them through reinforcing the rule of law and justice systems, and building resilience within communities. This includes looking at how civil society actors can contribute, and how international responses can be better aligned.

#### ***Session 8: Mitigating Impact and Building Community Resilience: civil society, community and the media***

Having seen the corrosive effect of corruption and impunity, new sources of momentum and resilience need to be found within the countries along the cocaine route. A number of the presentations in the previous two days proposed that in the absence of effective state institutions, targeting civil society and community level initiatives can create an environment that is inhospitable to organised crime and corruption or can offer alternative entry points. The goal of this panel was to explore ways in which to reinforcing support to traditional community structures, civil society organisations and an independent media to provide momentum and build resilience to mitigate the impact of organised crime and promote longer-term sustainable, crime-free development.

The presentations in this panel painted a vivid picture of the insecurity, violence and



restrictions to personal freedom and development which individuals in the communities affected by drug trafficking and organised crime experience on a daily basis. Paula Miraglia, a public sector specialist from Brazil, described the rising levels of urban violence in Brazil and in Latin America generally, to the point that it is now a feature of the national identity of many countries in the region. In Guinea Bissau, Luiz Vaz Martins, President of the Human Rights League of Guinea Bissau described how organised crime has affected less at the community level, but has fundamentally impacted the political process. No President in Guinea Bissau has ever completed their term, as high-level power over the drug trade is consolidated through coups and killing.

Whether or not citizens consciously attribute these issues to organised crime, differs from case to case. Professor Etannibi Alemika, Professor of Criminology from the University of Jos in Nigeria said that if you asked Nigerian citizens about their greatest concerns, cocaine trafficking would not be in the top 10. However, the issues would feature in that list are very much impacted by drug trafficking – violence, insecurity, lack of economic opportunity among others. One challenge that all panellists described is that organised crime fundamentally affects citizens' relationship to the state. In Brazil, inequality in cities has become deeply intertwined with violence and the capacity to provide safety services, and the state is seen as negligent. In Guinea Bissau, the average citizen sees little impact from the state beyond criminality and impunity, and social service provision is negligible.

With this in mind, the panellists offered a number of insights into how responses must be changed to leverage community level support. Firstly, if public opinion is to be mobilised, Prof. Alemika argued that there needs to a strong public education campaign based on credible data and information. Lessons can be learned from similar campaigns in HIV awareness or polio eradication, where the public are educated to understand the linkages between organised crime and its negative effects before they are mobilised. The campaign will have to be targeted effectively, with statistics on volumes and seizures from law enforcement nuanced with community surveys, public opinion polls, victim surveys and other data. Hans Mathieu, of the Friedrich Evert Stiftung Foundation in Colombia, proposed a new "*moral hierarchy of crime*" which acknowledges how all-pervasive criminal behaviour has become, and would allow a prioritisation of responses based upon the harm caused by individual crimes and the degree to which they violate human rights. This might, for example, prioritise a response to human trafficking and the sex industry over initiatives to combat trademark fraud in the luxury goods industry.

Secondly, the way that the state chooses to respond to organised crime, trafficking and criminal violence will shape the community level response. An overly repressive, law enforcement driven approach will lock civil society out of the solution and may exacerbate entrenched criminal tendencies by pitting them against the state. This was the case in initial responses in Nigeria, which Prof. Alemika noted coincided with the structural adjustment programmes that were economically reshaping the country and putting significant constraints

on community development and economic livelihoods. What we have learned in the last few decades is that in the long term, criminal justices need to be accompanied by social services and enhanced human security which is clearly perceived to be delivered by the state, as opposed to external actors. Ms. Miraglia gave the good example of the UPP programme in crime controlled areas of Sao Paulo, which addressed the issue through a combination of state security provision (community policing) and service delivery that was intended to send a clear message *“that these parts of the city matter, that they are going to become part of the city”* and that disenfranchised communities are brought back into the dialogue of statehood.

In looking at the role of civil society in this debate, and how international actors can engage and leverage them, the panellists offered some food for thought. Firstly, in most regions there is an active set of diverse civil society organisations, with varying capacity and mandates, and there is a need to be selective with which you engage. In Brazil, Ms. Maraglia noted that the World Bank undertook a community engagement mapping before supporting the UPP programme, and civil society were engaged from early on in the process of programme design. Mr. Mathieu cautioned that there is a need to be clear from the onset what role it is civil society is expected to play, whether it is in advocating for political change, promoting transparency by naming and shaming criminal actors or corrupt officials, or in the implementation of social outreach and delivery of services. As a summary conclusion to the debate in this panel, it is clear that civil society has a clear value to add, but needs to be strategically engaged if it is to be effective.

#### Session 9: Aligning International Responses

The intention with the panel in Session 9 was to broaden the scope of the debate once more, looking beyond the Cocaine Route Programme and EU interventions, to look at how the EU interventions would relate to other actors active in the field. Responses to the challenges of cocaine trafficking and organised crime globally have been characterised by a lack of coordination on multiple levels. This debate referenced back to earlier panels on the strategic frameworks that exist to combat drug trafficking and organised crime, and examined what measures could be taken to better align international responses to these strategies, improve coordination and cooperation for greater impact.

Alan Doss, Senior Political Advisor at the Kofi Annan Foundation and twice a UN Special Representative of the Secretary General and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General in countries whose post conflict transition has been fraught by disputes and violence over the control of resources and characterised by armed groups and gangs funded by illicit trafficking and trade offered four practical lessons on understanding how to factor organised crime into a broader peace building response and to align international donors around a nationally owned response. The first was the need to have a strong understanding of the political economy dynamics in the country and the region as *“one man’s warlord is another man’s service provider”*. This was echoed in the presentation by Fernando Ponz, Deputy Head of Division for West Africa at the European External Action Service, who spoke to the

need to have a clear understanding of the dynamics at multiple levels, local, national and regional.

The need to ensure consistencies of policies across multiple programme lines and actors was another theme all four of the presenters raised. An issue like impunity and governance is addressed from multiple angles – in governance programmes, through security sector reform, in anti-corruption programming and through resource allocation for development and economic policies. It is already a challenge for the EU to coordinate its various instruments in place at national and regional levels, which is then compounded by other international actors working in the same areas.

Bruce Ohr, a Counsellor at the Criminal Division of the US Department of Justice described how the USA takes a global approach to combatting drug trafficking, which is aimed at dismantling the hierarchy of organised crime and drug trafficking groups. This requires a focus not only on the kingpins, but also on those who enable illicit trade by facilitating money laundering or transportation. These are often individuals who sit in the grey area between licit and illicit markets, making them difficult to detect and convict. The US approach, which is very intelligence driven demands that the US can work in close cooperation and in excellent relations with many partners, which is a challenge in areas of high corruption, or with investigations that are very sensitive. Like a number of the other presentations of national perspectives, Mr. Ohr recounted how the US has now moved far beyond thinking that a law enforcement approach can alone be an effective strategy, but they now use a “whole of government” approach, which works with building capacity in criminal justice and development on the ground in target countries, which creates vetted units of trusted counterparts, and works with a wide range of new partners including in the private sector, civil society and other development partners. Some important achievements have been made – including the recent indictments of two Guinea-Bissau kingpins, which was a DEA lead initiative in cooperation with others. But Ohr concluded his comments with the recognition that international action can only be taken so far, and that to ensure a sustained resistance to organised crime and criminality, national justice systems need to build with integrity and capacity to address serious and organised crime directly.

Jean-Paul Joulia, Head of Unit, Regional Programmes Latin America and Caribbean for EuropeAid raised a different dimension of this debate, which was the need to prioritise amongst interventions, and to ensure that you have a strong understanding of the impact of each activity by monitoring and evaluating the outcomes. When working in partnership with national governments at a regional level, the challenge of prioritising is compounded, but agreements need to be found. Furthermore, with the proliferation of strategies and regional bodies in play, particularly in the Latin America region, there is a complex web of competing priorities through which to navigate. While this panel drew little in the way of conclusions on the best way to respond to these issues, what came through was a clear commitment from all sides that coordination of planning and programming will be required if organised crime is

going to be conquered. Otherwise we stand constantly in a “*David and Goliath*” scenario against an all-encompassing threat.

#### Session 10: Elements of a Successful Response

This panel had the unenviable task of trying to draw together the strands over all three days of discussion and debate in the conference and to crystallise what implications these have for improving programme interventions and the international response more broadly.

The conclusions of the panellists clustered around three main themes, the first of which was the quite complex issue of understanding and stating the nature of the threat. While those in law enforcement or at the front lines of the organised crime response can get caught in the thrill of the chase, this needs to be contextualised into a broader understanding of why combatting trafficking and organised crime is important, prioritising interventions and reducing harm. The opposite side of this coin was described by Michael von der Schulenburg, former UN SRSG in Sierra Leone. He observed that for the peacekeepers, development professionals, civil society or the general public – stakeholders raised repeatedly during the conference as being a vital part of the solution to organised crime - will probably not be seeing organised crime as the primary threat, and will need its impact to be explained and the linkages to be made to their work. Furthermore, there is yet little that quantifies what this actually means in terms of changing the way they do business on a daily basis. There needs to be a critical and practical evaluation of what needs to change in order to do better.

The presentations from Jose Ferreira Leite, Executive Director of MAOC-N and of Yaw Akrasi-Sarpong, Executive Secretary of NACOB, Ghana, brought once again to the fore the question of the need to be both holistic and comprehensive in approach. It was said on the first day that fighting organised crime is like squeezing a balloon. Mr. Ferreira Leite’s presentation showed how the balloon needs to be squeezed simultaneously from all sides, and that weak links in information, or along the enforcement chain at airports or seaports with low capacity or controls, must be reinforced as they will inevitably become the next targets for traffickers. Yaw Akrasi-Sarpong also reiterated the call for a holistic approach along the criminal justice chain, and to build capacity and think strategically about all dimensions of the response, not just seizure and interdiction.

Finally, Francisco Thoumi, the INCB Member from Colombia raised the final dominant theme of the conference – the need for trust, cooperation and coordination. In what was quite a philosophical conclusion to the panel discussions, Mr. Thoumi examined the enormous cultural, historical and perspective differences that will need to be overcome if true cooperation is to be achieved. He observed that the response to organised crime would require both a shared understanding and a sense of common goals, but noted the dichotomous challenge of having to both make personal and relevant the impact and costs of organised crime, whilst at the same time depersonalising the individual and institutional perspectives that will necessarily be involved.

### Official Closure

The official closure of the conference, by Joelle Jenny, Director, Security Policy and Conflict Prevention, European External Action Service; Luigi Maccotta, Central Director for Latin America, Directorate General for Globalization, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy and Francesco Cirillo, Deputy Director General of Public Security, Ministry of Interior, Italy reiterated and in part answered the open question of Mr. Thoumi regarding how the true integrated and cooperative partnership required to end organised crime and drug trafficking could be achieved.

In concluding the speakers noted on the extraordinary diversity of the participants who had attended this meeting, drawn as they are from as Ms. Jenny phrased it, “*all segments society*”, across different regions, and disciplines. This conference has been both an important and unique opportunity to bridge some of the divides described so articulately throughout the three days of the conference, and the momentum should be seized to continue to build new partnerships and strengthen existing cooperative relationships. Finally, the closing speakers reiterated the commitment of their institutions and organisations to continuing to fight against organised crime and to mitigate its impact on individuals along the cocaine route from the Andes to Europe.