



**19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE EUROPEAN PARTNERS AGAINST CORRUPTION (EPAC/EACN)  
SWEDEN, 10-12 DECEMBER 2019**

**STOCKHOLM DECLARATION 2019**

We, the heads and key representatives of the national Police Oversight Bodies (POBs) and anti-corruption authorities (ACAs) of the Member States of the Council of Europe and the European Union,

*Expressing* our gratitude to the Special Investigations Department of the Swedish Police Authority (SU) for generously hosting and efficiently and successfully organising this conference;

*Acknowledging and welcoming* the endeavour of the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union to foster joint efforts and responsibility regarding anti-corruption measures and to enhance mutual trust between the EU Member States by fighting against corruption;

*Recalling* international conventions, instruments and mechanisms, in particular the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and relevant Council of Europe conventions, as well as the GRECO monitoring mechanism and the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention;

*Welcoming* the accession of the European Union to GRECO, the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption, as an observer;

*Welcoming* the EU Directive on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law, 2019/1937;

*Highlighting* the 2021 UN "Special session of the General Assembly against corruption" in New York and the respective preparatory work to be accomplished at the upcoming CoSP;

*Recalling* the EPAC/EACN Declarations adopted in Rust (2018), Lisbon (2017), Riga (2016), Paris (2015), Sofia (2014), Krakow (2013), Barcelona (2012), Laxenburg (2011), Oradea (2010), Nova Gorica (2009), Manchester (2008), Helsinki (2007), Budapest (2006), Lisbon (2005) and Vienna (2004);

*Acknowledging* that corruption in all forms is a serious threat to the development, security and stability of states, which has harmful and detrimental consequences and undermines ethical values and the administration of justice;

*Continuing* to support the development of common standards and best practices for POBs and ACAs, and thus to set up working groups strengthening the exchange of best practices between POBs and ACAs and promoting cross-sector cooperation;

*Encouraging* further POBs and ACAs to actively participate in the networks' activities;


Recommend participating members to actively

- exchange best practices with other POBs and ACAs in order to develop general guidelines including the following topics: corruption within government agencies, prevention of abuse of office, electoral fraud, strengthening and guarding the independence and quality of POBs and ACAs,
- develop and implement codes of conduct and guidelines regarding positions within government agencies, in particular law enforcement agencies, in their respective countries,
- make use of handbooks and guidelines developed by EPAC/EACN Working Groups,
- strengthen existing and develop new ways of international cooperation and exchange of information and to intensify knowledge transfer by using already existing tools, such as the Europol Exchange Network Application (SIENA) and the Europol Platform for Experts (EPE);

*Furthermore*, call on states to actively

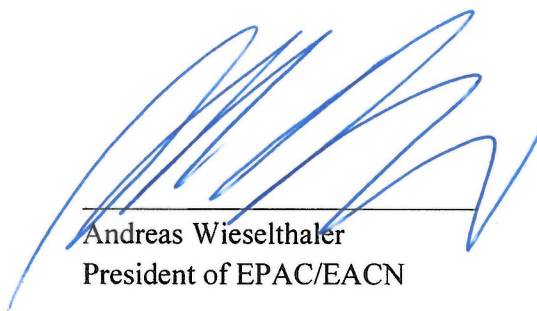
- promote and protect the (financial) independence and ability of POBs and ACAs to perform their functions effectively and efficiently and without undue political influence; in that respect refrain from weakening criminal legislation or the organisational framework of the above mentioned agencies.
- adopt as a principle that police agencies must refer to POBs all allegations of criminal conduct directed against members of police agencies.
- work on a strong whistleblowing protection system, accessible to all, highly protective and backed by sufficient resources;
- assure that immunities enjoyed by members of parliament, ministers, members of the judiciary and other branches of government are applied in due course and do not become an instrument of obstruction of justice.

The Declaration will be widely circulated by the members in their respective countries and submitted to relevant EU institutions and bodies, the Council of Europe's GRECO, and UNODC.



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Ebba Sverne Arvill  
Police Commissioner  
Special Investigations Department



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Andreas Wieselthaler  
President of EPAC/EACN