

Georgia and Eurojust sign cooperation agreement

Stepping up the fight against organised crime

The Hague, 29 March 2019

A cooperation agreement in criminal matters was signed at Eurojust, the EU's Judicial Cooperation Unit, by H.E. Ms Thea Tsulukiani, Minister of Justice of Georgia, Mr Shalva Tadumadze, Prosecutor General of Georgia, and Mr Ladislav Hamran, President of Eurojust, to strengthen the joint fight against cross-border organised crime in the European Union and South Caucasus. This first agreement between Eurojust and a State of the region will foster judicial and strategic cooperation as it will unlock the possibility to swiftly and safely exchange information and evidence. Present at the signing ceremony were H.E. Mr George Sharvashidze, Ambassador of Georgia to the Kingdom of the Netherlands and other high-ranking Georgian officials.

✘ Photos © Eurojust. Top left, H.E. Ms Tsulukiani, Mr Hamran, Mr Tadumadze. Bottom right, Georgian and Eurojust delegation, including H.E. Ambassador Sharvashidze.

Ms Tsulukiani said: *'Today's bilateral agreement completes four years of negotiations with Eurojust. In the new framework of our partnership, we will further develop existing legal and institutional mechanisms to improve convergence with EU standards and policies in judicial cooperation in criminal matters. The agreement will strengthen the joint institutional and operational capacity of the European Union and Georgia to successfully deal with transborder crime and other common challenges.'*

Mr Hamran said: *'This cooperation agreement marks a major step forward in our valuable partnership with Georgia. In recent years, our close cooperation has frequently made a tangible difference in the prosecution of serious cross-border crime, strengthening our efforts to bring suspects to justice and better protect our citizens. I am certain that this cooperation agreement will allow us to share even more operational and strategic successes in the future, making this world safer one case at a time.'*

Reinforced judicial cooperation with Georgia

✘ The agreement provides for quick and efficient exchange of information and evidence between Georgia, EU Member States, and third States that have concluded a cooperation agreement with Eurojust. It will help Eurojust to better target Georgian organised crime groups that are transnationally active and pose a major threat to security in Europe. Georgia will benefit from accessing Eurojust's information systems and have the possibility to share personal data and evidence in criminal investigations and prosecutions across Europe. The agreement enables Georgia to also appoint a Liaison Prosecutor to Eurojust to enhance operational cooperation and more closely coordinate

international actions facilitated by Eurojust. Georgia is one of the most active third States in judicial cooperation supported by Eurojust; since 2012, it was involved in 27 transnational investigations into swindling and fraud, organised property crime, money laundering, and other crimes. *Click on image to expand.*

Background: Eurojust cooperation agreements

Eurojust is the European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit set up in 2002 to stimulate and enhance the cooperation between the competent authorities of the Member States and improve the coordination of their investigations and prosecutions, in relation to serious organised cross-border crime. Eurojust can formally cooperate with third States with which it has signed cooperation agreements for the exchange of judicial information and personal data. Eurojust has concluded cooperation agreements with 11 third States: Albania, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, North Macedonia, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the USA. Six of these States have also appointed a Liaison Prosecutor to Eurojust.

More information