INFORMAL CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF JUSTICE
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

FROM RULES TO RESULTS: A JUDICIAL AGENDA FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST FINANCIAL CRIME

Strasbourg, 16 June 2026

We, the Ministers of Justice of the member States of the Council of Europe[1], meeting in Strasbourg on 16 June 2026, under the Monegasque Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, united in our shared responsibility to protect the rule of law, the integrity of financial systems and the security of our societies;

REAFFIRMING that money laundering and terrorist financing constitute major threats to democratic security, in that they foster organised crime, corruption, facilitate foreign interference and the infiltration of the legitimate economy, undermine the rule of law and the integrity of public and private institutions, and weaken citizens' trust in institutions;

AWARE that criminal networks exploit all technological developments, including the digitalisation of financial flows, investment in crypto-assets, digital platforms and tools using artificial intelligence, in order to conceal, fragment, transfer and reinvest the proceeds of crime across borders;

STRESSING that the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing requires effective, swift judicial action adapted to the sophistication of contemporary criminal techniques;

RECALLING the fundamental importance of the Council of Europe's legal instruments in this field, notably the 1990 Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime (CET no.141, the Strasbourg Convention), the 2005 Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism (CETS no. 198, the Warsaw Convention), as well as the role of the Conference of the Parties to the Warsaw Convention in monitoring its implementation and

1. List of member States who have supported this declaration : Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

that of the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) in assessing compliance with the standards of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the effectiveness of national anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing systems;

UNDERLINING the importance of the forthcoming opening for signature of the Additional Protocol to the Warsaw Convention, which aims to encourage States to provide the widest possible scope for the exchange of information, for the seizure and the confiscation of property, including virtual or digital assets;

CONSIDERING that assessing the effectiveness of efforts to combat financial crime cannot rest solely on the existence of legal standards, but must also be measured through their concrete results, particularly in terms of detection, investigations, prosecutions, convictions, confiscation and the effective recovery of criminal assets;

RECOGNISING the essential role not only of judicial authorities and investigative services, but also of financial intelligence units, supervisory and regulatory authorities, tax administrations, as well as private-sector actors, in particular the banking sector and other obliged entities, in preventing and detecting illicit financial flows;

CONVINCED that the specialisation of judges, prosecutors, investigators and other competent actors, the use of appropriate investigative techniques, and investment in high-performance technological tools may contribute to ensuring an appropriate and sustainable response to financial crime;

STRESSING the importance of swift international administrative, police and judicial co-operation, based on mutual trust, reciprocity, and the early exchange of information, as well as the effective use of all advanced co-operation instruments provided for in multilateral, regional or bilateral instruments, in order to prevent criminals from exploiting differences between legal systems;

RECALLING that any action undertaken in the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing must remain fully compliant with the obligations arising under the European Convention on Human Rights and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights;

CONVINCED that depriving criminals of the profits derived from their illicit activities is one of the most effective means of combating crime, preventing its recurrence and restoring confidence in the rule of law;

WELCOMING the initiative of the Monegasque Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to place on the ministerial agenda the issue of the effectiveness of judicial responses to financial crime and to promote a high-level dialogue between member States on ways to achieve concrete and measurable results.

WE HEREBY DECLARE:

I. Protecting Democratic Security and the Rule of Law

1. Reaffirm our common and unwavering determination to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, which represent major threats to democratic security, the rule of law, the stability of our societies, and the integrity and credibility of our economic and financial systems.

2. Ensure that anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures are implemented in an effective, proportionate and risk-based manner, while preserving legitimate economic and financial activities and guaranteeing the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms , in accordance with the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.

3. Strengthen the effective implementation of applicable Council of Europe conventions and their protocols, in the fields of criminal co-operation, the fight against money laundering, asset confiscation and recovery, corruption and cybercrime, and encourage the signature and ratification beyond the member States of the Council of Europe where appropriate.

4. Promote the development of integrated national strategies involving all relevant public authorities and private-sector entities subject to anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) obligations, in order to ensure a coordinated and coherent approach to combating illicit financial flows.

II. Turning Standards into Results

5. Pursue a resolute criminal justice response to financial crime, ensuring that money laundering and terrorist financing offences are effectively investigated and prosecuted and, where appropriate, give rise to effective, proportionate and dissuasive criminal sanctions against natural and legal persons, so that financial crime cannot be regarded as an acceptable risk or merely a cost of doing business.

6. Develop the institutional, operational and human capacities for an effective fight

against financial crime, in particular by strengthening institutional co-operation, including through multidisciplinary teams, and promoting, where appropriate the specialisation of prosecutors, judges, investigators and supervisory and regulatory authorities, appropriate training and the exchange of good practices.

7. Encourage the mobilisation of sufficient and qualified human resources at all levels of the criminal justice chain in order to ensure the swift and effective handling of cases and improve operational results.

8. Foster a culture of evaluation of measures implemented by States, and of the results achieved, without prejudice to the periodic benefit derived from international evaluation processes.

III. Depriving Criminals of Their Profits

9. Support the central and strategic role of financial intelligence units in the early detection and analysis of suspicious transactions, guarantee their operational, technical and financial autonomy, and enable a smooth, rapid and secure exchange of relevant information between them and administrative, law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities, while ensuring strict compliance with applicable national and international legal frameworks.

10. Promote the continuous improvement of the quality, relevance and operational use of suspicious transaction reports, notably through strengthened awareness-raising, training and dialogue with obliged entities in order to increase their added value for financial intelligence units and to facilitate, where justified, the swift referral of cases to law-enforcement authorities.

11. Develop the financial and asset investigation capacities of investigative and prosecutorial authorities, in compliance with fundamental rights and domestic legislation, notably through the use of special investigative techniques, financial investigations, in-depth asset investigations, as well as innovative technological tools, in order to detect, trace and analyse the proceeds of crime and complex financial flows, including those involving crypto-assets.

12. Strengthen States' capacities to identify, freeze, seize, confiscate and recover the proceeds of crime, including digital assets and crypto-assets, including through dedicated structures, and effective co-operation among competent authorities.

13. Strengthen mechanisms for the management of seized and confiscated property, which may include, the establishment of specialised structures, in order to preserve

the economic value of seized property during proceedings and, following confiscation, ensure its optimal management and consider, with due regard to the rights of victims and, in accordance with national legislation, using confiscated property for the benefit of society, the public interest, crime prevention and the strengthening of the capacities of competent authorities.

IV. Acting Together in Response to New Threats

14. Promote swifter and more operational international judicial co-operation between judges and prosecutors, notably with regard to the early exchange of information, the execution of mutual legal assistance requests, joint investigation teams, co-ordinated operations involving several States, cross-border seizures and the sharing of confiscated assets.

15. Support the development of professional networks and exchange platforms among judges, prosecutors and other practitioners specialised in combating financial crime, in order to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience, the dissemination of good practices, professional specialisation, the rapid identification of competent counterparts and the efficient handling of requests, while fostering a common culture of co-operation.

16. Encourage member States to adapt their legal and institutional frameworks to new forms of financial crime linked to digital technologies, artificial intelligence, decentralised platforms and new mechanisms for anonymising transactions.

17. Commit to continuing the political and judicial dialogue initiated in Strasbourg in order to strengthen mutual trust, the exchange of experience and concrete co-operation between the member States of the Council of Europe.

We, the Ministers of Justice of the member States of the Council of Europe, meeting in Strasbourg under the Monegasque Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, declare our determination to continue transforming standards into concrete results, to strengthen the effectiveness of judicial responses to financial crime and to work collectively so that no proceeds of crime can find safe haven within our States.