

Running time: 9 minutes
expiration:

1. Welcome by Jan Kleijssen (Director, Directorate of the Council of Europe "Information Society and Action against Crime")
2. **Greeting from Mrs. Secretary of State**
3. Welcome/ Introduction to the daily programme by Erik Verbert, Vice-Chairman of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Operation of European Convention on Co-operation in Criminal Matters (PC-OC Panel = Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the Application of European Conventions on Cooperation in Criminal Matters)
4. Topic I: Mutual legal assistance - Cooperation between the Member States of the Council of Europe and the European Public Prosecutor's Office (speaker: Andrés Ritter (Deputy European Prosecutor General), Hans-Holger Herrfeld (BMJV), Christian Sager (Swiss BfJ),
5. Topic II: Extradition - 3 parallel workshops (speakers of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, Eurojust, the American DoJ, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Association of Ibero-American Prosecutors)

Rede the
Secretary of State of the Federal Ministry
of Justice and Consumer Protection
Dr. Margaretha Sudhof

German Chairmanship of the Committee of
Ministers of the Council of Europe

Online conference on

**"Strengthening international cooperation in
criminal matters - extradition and mutual
legal assistance"**

**im Rahmen der 79. Plenumssitzung des
PC-OC-Gremiums (Committee of Experts
on the Operation of European Conventions
on Co-operation in Criminal Matters) im
Europarat**

The word spoken applies!

Dear Mr. Kleijssen,
Mr. Verbert,
Mr. Ritter,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I warmly welcome you to today's conference on the occasion of the German Presidency of the Committee of the Council of Europe.

I would very much like to have met you personally in Strasbourg today. Unfortunately, however, the Corona pandemic is still making a dent in our calculations.

There is a pity, everyone knows that plenary work thrives above all on direct exchanges on the ground and is characterised by this.

However, I am all the more pleased that you will continue your work in this virtual format and bring your expertise on issues of extradition and other legal assistance in a variety of ways.

The Council of Europe is of the utmost importance for Germany. Its agreements make an invaluable contribution to the achievement of the fundamental values of our existence, including:

- human rights, democracy and the rule of law,
- the promotion of social rights and social cohesion,
- the development of a diverse European cultural identity
- common solutions to social problems.

The Federal Republic of Germany can also look back on many years of successful cooperation in respecting the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. It has been almost 70 years since joining as a full member – a beautiful anniversary.

And international cooperation in criminal matters is now more important than ever.

Just think of politically motivated assassinations, the Ibiza affair or Wirecard – to name but the most famous cases of recent times.

The ever-increasing globalization and the forms of criminality of the digital world raise complex questions of criminal cooperation. Clear rules are essential for the effective fight against criminal offences, as are the provisions

which coordinate cross-border criminal proceedings.

The PC-OC-Panel unifies all these building blocks, it on the one hand brings experts inside and experts from all member and observer states and organizations into contact with each other in order to solve practical problems. On the other hand, the Panel has the important function of keeping the basic seam of cooperation up-to-date and updating it. This applies in particular to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and the European Convention on Extradition.

Your commitment and active professional exchange is due to the high quality of criminal

cooperation on the basis of the Council of Europe Conventions.

Today's agenda includes issues that are equally topical and of great importance for law enforcement in all the Member States of the Council of Europe.

Let's take a look at what awaits us today:

The next issue will be the issue of mutual legal assistance and cooperation between the Member States of the Council of Europe and the European Public Prosecutor's Office.

Ladies and gentlemen, after many years of intensive negotiations on the regulation and even after many years of active construction, the European Public Prosecutor's Office is now

in the starting blocks. It will investigate, prosecute and bring charges across borders on a territory of – currently – 22 EU Member States, to the detriment of the financial interests of the European Union. This is a huge asset for effective prosecution of cross-border economic crime.

But there are also major challenges to overcome. That is why the European Public Prosecutor's Office needs good cooperation, particularly with the Member States of the Council of Europe. How this cooperation will be in practice in the future will therefore be examined from different perspectives:

- from the perspective of the European Public Prosecutor's Office
- from the perspective of Germany as a participating Member State and

- from the perspective of Switzerland as a so-called third country.

The workshops, which will take place this afternoon, will focus on current challenges in the field of delivery traffic. You can choose from three exciting topics:

Firstly, the problem field of inhumane prison conditions. The case law of the ECtHR is a guide for global extradition.

The second issue is the case law of the ECJ on the tension between the obligation under international law to extradite and the obligation under EU law to protect EU citizens from measures which may deprive them of the right of free movement and residence in the EU. The key word is: Petruhhin judgment. This

judgment will certainly have already caused some of you headaches.

And thirdly, a workshop on a very topical topic: the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on extradition. It will be exciting to see what different experiences you have had and what common lessons we can learn from them for the future.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you an exciting professional exchange for today's event and hope that the lectures and workshops will provide many impulses for the successful design of the future cooperation.

Finally, I would like to express my special thanks to the PC-OC Secretariat for the active support in the organisation of this conference.