

**Joint U.S.-EU statement following the U.S.-EU Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Meeting**

**Washington D.C., December 16, 2021**

1. On December 16, 2021, the U.S.-EU Ministerial Meeting on Justice and Home Affairs took place in Washington D.C. The United States was represented by Attorney General Merrick B. Garland and by Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas. The European Union was represented by Commissioner for Justice Didier Reynders, Commissioner for Home Affairs Ylva Johansson, Slovenian Ministers for Justice Marjan Dikaučič and for Home Affairs Aleš Hojs, on behalf of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator Ilkka Salmi, Executive Director of Europol Catherine de Bolle, and President of Eurojust Ladislav Hamran.
2. Following the commitments to renew the transatlantic partnership made at the U.S.-EU Ministerial in Lisbon in June 2021, the United States and the European Union reiterated the importance of seeking common solutions to shared challenges and continuing to uphold democracy and respect for the rule of law.
3. The United States and the European Union stated their determination to preserve the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime as the primary instrument for international cooperation on cybercrime and expressed support for its recently adopted Second Additional Protocol to enhance cooperation on cybercrime and e-evidence. They further committed to consult each other and cooperate closely in the negotiations on a future United Nations international legal instrument on cybercrime.
4. The United States and the European Union also reiterated their determination to increase their cooperation in building resilience against as well as preventing, investigating, and prosecuting all forms of cybercrime, including, in particular, child sexual abuse and ransomware. They expressed support for the outcome of the Ministerial Conference organized on November 12, 2021 by the Slovenian Presidency on the prevention and investigation of child sexual abuse, and also agreed to intensify cooperation with internet service providers, social media platforms, and electronic communication providers.

5. The United States and the European Union committed to exchange best practices on combatting ransomware, including via increased resilience and investigative and judicial action, and on raising public awareness on how to protect networks and avoid having to pay ransom. The United States and European Union will continue to explore ways to enhance international cooperation in the fight against ransomware, involving all relevant stakeholders.
6. The United States and the European Union discussed the benefits and risks of using artificial intelligence technologies in justice and home affairs matters. They affirmed their shared commitment to use those technologies in a responsible and trustworthy manner, so as to ensure effective action against crime while fully respecting individual rights and liberties. They further discussed digital challenges and tools, and vowed to work to address other shared challenges and further improve international cooperation.
7. The United States and the European Union exchanged views on areas for further cooperation in the justice field. They committed to enhance cooperation on environmental crime, including by cooperating to hold accountable persons who commit and profit from environmental crimes. Further, they agreed to enhance police and judicial cooperation against transnational crime and terrorism, including with support from Europol and Eurojust, and discussed how best to support the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice.
8. The United States and the European Union affirmed their commitment to prevent and combat terrorism and to continue working together to address and combat existing and emerging threats. The two sides agreed on the key role of battlefield information for screening and vetting at external borders, as well as investigation and prosecution of suspected terrorists. The two sides also praised the effective operational work of, and information exchange between, EU and U.S. authorities. In this regard, the United States and the European Union discussed the challenges to international security arising from the current situation in Afghanistan.
9. The United States and the European Union expressed concern with the rise of violent extremism, as well as other crimes motivated by hate, racism, and xenophobia. They

stressed their willingness to work jointly to identify and prevent transnational links between extremist groups.

10. The United States and the European Union reiterated their mutual commitment to exchange Passenger Name Record (PNR) data to ensure the safety of their citizens while protecting the privacy of travellers. They will continue to work together in a constructive way on the findings and recommendations of the joint evaluation of the PNR Agreement. Both sides highlighted the importance of PNR data processing as a key instrument to prevent, detect, investigate, and prosecute terrorism and combat serious crime, including child exploitation. They further reaffirmed their intention to work together to uphold and promote high standards for the global use of PNR data, including in the context of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).
11. The United States and the European Union exchanged views on recent developments of their respective migration and asylum policies and welcomed the recent re-enactment of the EU-U.S. Migration Platform as a forum for dialogue on such matters. The two sides addressed, in particular, the migration challenges arising from the situation in Afghanistan, which calls for a comprehensive response of the international community, addressing both the related humanitarian needs and the prevention of irregular migration, and the fight against migrant smuggling and human trafficking. The United States and the European Union condemned in the strongest terms the state-sponsored instrumentalization and exploitation of migrants and agreed to work together to prevent such phenomena, including through outreach to relevant third countries.
12. The United States and the European Union welcomed the recent designation of Croatia as the newest member of the U.S. Visa Waiver Program (VWP), which represents a great achievement towards full visa reciprocity for all EU Member States. The two sides reiterated their willingness to pursue ongoing efforts in the context of the tripartite process and bilateral discussions. The European Union updated the United States on the successful use of the EU Digital COVID Certificate as the international standard to safely facilitate freedom of movement in the European Union and worldwide.
13. Finally, the United States and the European Union agreed to meet again, in France, in the first half of 2022.