



ANNUAL MEETING OF EL PACCTO 2.0
A PARTNERSHIP THAT PROTECTS:
KEY MILESTONE TOWARDS
THE EU–CELAC SUMMIT

EL PACCTO

2.0 EU-LAC Partnership on
justice and security



ANNUAL MEETING 2025 OF THE EL PACCTO 2.0 PROGRAMME

CONCLUSIONS OF THE HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE

EL PACCTO 2.0 is a cooperation programme, but it has also succeeded in becoming a forum for discussion, consensus-building, and the exchange of experiences. With an eye on the forthcoming CELAC-EU Summit, to be held in Santa Marta, Colombia, the Annual Meeting of the Programme, held in June 2025 in Lima, served as a platform for Justice and Security institutions from the European Union, Latin America, and the Caribbean to deepen political dialogue on their strategic partnership.

The broad institutional response to this call, with up to 84 authorities and a total of 421 participants from 44 countries, representing 160 institutions, enabled debate on the challenges posed by new modalities of organised crime. Its conclusions outline full consensus on how transnational organised crime today is a threat to the rule of law, democracy, and global stability, putting at risk the citizen security that these very Justice and Security institutions are responsible for safeguarding. It is a threat that exceeds the traditional parameters of public authorities' action and arises at a historic moment, given the complexity of the current geopolitical situation, requiring a step forward.

This reality calls for a new response, one that requires innovation in public policy to transform through operational action, proposing a holistic approach that incorporates civil society and includes a broad analysis of causes and consequences in terms of democratic governance, inequality, and inclusion. A response that, as a prior step, requires strengthening interinstitutional coordination across all areas of political and technical action, making international cooperation an everyday activity. Abandoning the anecdotal view of work on organised crime by adopting a strategic outlook and a vigilant, permanent response.

That response to organised crime must be scrupulously grounded in the applicable law, decisively moving towards the harmonisation and unification of public policies and regulatory frameworks, as well as international criteria and standards — on data protection, transnational evidence, due process, prison treatment and rehabilitation, etc. — but above all towards the defence of the democratic values we share, adopting a comprehensive rule-of-law vision in the joint action of Justice and Security against organised crime that must permeate all public action.

A multilateral and shared vision, therefore, that includes the promotion, protection, and respect of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as the fight against all forms of discrimination. Organised crime is a security and public health issue that, through multifaceted infiltration, contaminates institutional, private, and civil society structures. It generates economic impacts across all state protection and social welfare structures and dynamics capable of dramatically harming vulnerable groups. Its effects are already damaging and will further damage, in the long term, youth, whose voice must be heard in building an institutional response, and they deepen the gender gap present in our societies, requiring a coherent response.

A vision that must crystallise into concrete and effective public policies against organised crime, and must, in the short term, provide tools for strategic and proactive decision-making against criminal networks, dismantling their economic structures and preventing the corruption and infiltration of public and private institutions.

This objective can only be achieved through coordinated regional and bi-regional strategies against organised crime, progressively integrating preventive and repressive approaches, encompassing protection and reparation, as well as the joint action of our States' Justice and Security sectors. To this end, it is necessary to strengthen our strategic partnership in Justice and Security, looking towards the forthcoming CELAC-EU Summit, so that it may, this time, adopt concrete, measurable, and verifiable commitments.

The dialogues held during the EL PACCTO 2.0 Programme Annual Meeting have focused on priority areas where it is urgent to define public policies that support effective, coordinated Police and Justice action, also incorporating other state institutions and civil society.

Knowing the threat to rethink the response: data-driven public policy

The first of these is knowledge, in a broad sense. Faced with an evolving threat, as pointed out by the latest SOCTA and IDEAL reports from EUROPOL and CLASI, it is necessary to develop and connect intelligence gathering and analysis mechanisms

that allow us to truly understand the characteristics and parameters of organised crime activity. The interinstitutional and international exchange of such intelligence represents the next frontier. To make this possible, not only is an adequate regulatory framework essential, but also the building of mutual trust; only then can we know the threat to rethink the response.

For this, there is an urgent short-term need: the national and regional strengthening of capacities to access, manage, process, exchange, and exploit data, in compliance with the most advanced protection standards. Maximum interoperability between systems is also a prerequisite for providing updated responses to organised crime's use of new technologies, including the implementation of artificial intelligence tools, understanding that only maximum digital capacity, with a robust conventional and national regulatory framework, allows the generation of elements for public authorities' decision-making and the adoption of genuine common security and strategic criminal prosecution policies.

Breaking the business model: #followthemoney and expanding state action

These policies must decisively focus on breaking the criminal business model, for which three combined actions are necessary.

First, the fight against the infiltration of organised crime into the real economy, committing to incorporating a robust financial perspective into all investigations linked to organised crime. The proper use of financial intelligence, public-private cooperation, and the commitment to strengthened and broad models of asset confiscation and reuse, paying particular attention to their transnational effectiveness, is an urgent need.

Second, the fight against the infiltration of transnational crime into public authorities. Corruption in Justice and Security institutions, as well as in the political sphere, is one of the enabling factors in building high-risk criminal networks. It is necessary to incorporate administrative authorities and commercial and corporate operators into a preventive dynamic, focusing on public procurement, institutional transparency, sufficient resources and infrastructure, and recruitment and career mechanisms.

In this regard, the relevance of the prison system in the infiltration of organised crime into public authorities cannot be forgotten: not only because the lack of proper prison management and classification facilitates the multiplication of criminal connections, enabling the continuation of illicit activities from prisons, but also because the absence of calm bi-regional dialogue on this matter undermines the chances of success of the already active Justice and Security structures.

Third, attention to the structural conditions that allow transnational organised crime to prosper. Not only the institutional risk gaps that allow its infiltration but also the socio-economic gaps that allow it to take root: the lack of opportunities, the lack of resources, discrimination. Public authorities' neglect must be transformed into inclusive and gender-sensitive policies, which are also preventive, with particular care regarding the protection and participation of youth in their design. The prevention of recruitment and the implementation of genuinely reparative restorative justice systems are just two of the areas that require their participation, along with that of civil society, in the analysis of the causes and consequences of organised crime.

Norms, tools, and institutions prepared for international cooperation

To connect this effort to disrupt the criminal business model with common public policies and the strategic prosecution of criminal networks, it is necessary to further commit to regulatory tools and advanced structures for the application of police power, administration of justice, prison management, and international police and judicial cooperation.

The absolute precondition for this commitment is a solid and specialised regulatory basis, allowing for both an updated classification of criminal offences — including environmental crimes and cybercrime — and updated procedural tools in the fields of investigative measures, communication interception, international transfer of evidence and proceedings, the confiscation (in the broadest possible sense) of illicitly obtained assets, or data protection.

The implementation of such regulation cannot ignore the fact that the timelines for its approval and the divergences in its classification and application generate impunity gaps: the harmonisation of transnational offence regulation and police and procedural mechanisms must be pursued even before their approval, through the development of model laws, always under international standards and connected with the most relevant international treaties in the field.

In this sense, the prompt ratification of the minimum core of international conventions against organised crime (not only the Palermo, Vienna, and Mérida Conventions, but also the Budapest Convention and its additional protocols, the Hanoi Convention, the Medellín Treaty, the Viña del Mar Convention on Joint Investigation Teams, the San José Treaty, or the Strasbourg Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters) is essential to ensure that the legal arsenal against organised crime has no gaps.

Particular attention must be paid among them to the Constitutive Treaty of AMERIPOL: its legal consolidation is, together with the expansion of working and international agreements between EU agencies and institutions and those of Latin America and the Caribbean, one of the key pieces for the rest of the operators in our regions to align and generate the appropriate synergies.

This regulatory framework — national and conventional — also requires, for its effective implementation, the existence of specialised units both in public policy design and in the implementation by police forces, prosecution services, and judicial authorities of its contents. The exchange of best practices requires deep and high-quality knowledge of law enforcement mechanisms, as well as significant doses of interinstitutional trust. The interconnection of these units through specialised centres, networks, nodes, or enhanced cooperation mechanisms is the only way to ensure that the deployment of major tools, such as Joint Investigation Teams, ceases to appear as an isolated experience and becomes an element of institutional normality.

High-risk criminal convergence

Strengthening intelligence and information mechanisms, combating the enabling conditions of organised crime, and deploying legal, conventional, and institutional tools is only one side of the coin. Providing permanent solutions to organised crime requires modulating the response, taking into account the most notable characteristics of the threat faced.

The current context is undoubtedly more complex due to the multiplication of poly-criminal actors, the emergence of new routes for illicit goods trafficking, and the increase in grey zones from where brokers and criminal nodes with global reach operate. Illegal mining continues to be a matter of paramount importance due to its devastating effects on vulnerable populations, territory, and ecosystems, just like human trafficking and smuggling, whose rates multiply along human mobility routes precisely due to these multi-offensive dynamics of organised crime.

In any case, it is undeniable that drug trafficking continues to be the main vector of the rest of criminality; the organising axis through which organisations take shape, routes are designed, and the most direct impact on governance, citizen security, development, and human rights is generated, through mechanisms of territorial control and exploitation of the most vulnerable communities. Combating it requires political will, based on a vision of shared responsibility, and differentiated operational coordination: its connection with arms trafficking has generated unmanageable

levels of violence that take the form of social and territorial control structures, extortion, contract killings, and murder.

The fight against drug trafficking must, in any case, be integrated into a general vision of repression of organised crime and focused on the identification of high-value targets, with particular attention to the security of logistical hubs, which must be secured through intelligence, public-private cooperation, and preventive security systems. This criminal supply chain — shared with other major trafficking — impacts the ports of both regions through specialised providers of criminal services, often shielded by cybercrime or the use of new technologies to conceal criminal activity, such as encrypted communication systems or cryptocurrencies and tokens for criminal financing. Connecting sectoral operators, such as financial intelligence units or maritime and port operators, with Law Enforcement Agencies and Prosecutor's Offices, which hold command over major operations and strategic prosecution policy, is the first action towards success.

The joint design of operational actions to confront the various criminal markets must be a priority for all involved parties: Justice and Security institutions, simultaneously, from the European Union, Latin America, and the Caribbean. It is necessary that the security and justice cycles already underway identify indicators that allow not only the combatting of the most urgent threats but also doing so on a permanent basis, through the establishment of coalitions, alliances, and task forces.

Faced with shared challenges: common architecture and strategic vision

Our regions have a multitude of regional and bi-regional Justice and Security structures, which have demonstrated their willingness to collaborate among themselves and which, in recent years, have developed strategic guidelines against organised crime that must serve as elements for building towards even greater coordination.

Both the CLASI-European Union Declaration and the Programmatic Agreement of the Justice Policy Cycle, directly supported by EL PACCTO 2.0, must grow and become essential pieces for bi-regional progress. Sectoral strategies on cybercrime or anti-corruption complement the visions that address specific geographic realities, such as those emanating from MERCOSUR, the Andean Community, CARICOM, or ACTO. They can also be associated with the strategies already underway both in the European Union, such as its Roadmap against Drug Trafficking or the *ProtectEU* Strategy, and in the Caribbean, with the Needham's Point Declaration on Criminal Justice Reform issued by its Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ).

This path of strategic integration through the coordination of Justice and Security structures between the European Union, Latin America, and the Caribbean requires sustained political will over time, both to design a coherent and robust bi-regional public policy and, subsequently, to operationally translate these dialogues. Connecting CLASI, C-JUST, the JHA Council, and CARICOM with EUROPOL, EUROJUST, IMPACS, EPPO, EJOEN, or AMERIPOL. Incorporating the various networks operating in the region, which hold specialised technical knowledge and geographic adaptability.

A strategic partnership on Justice and Security

The activity of EL PACCTO 2.0, as a flagship cooperation programme oriented towards facilitating bi-regional dialogue, institutional strengthening, and support for operational action, has been considered of capital importance by all attendees. In the future, it will continue to be so if, and only if, it succeeds in offering new responses adapted to the magnitude of the challenge posed today by organised crime, strengthening the rule of law and citizen security, transforming the EU Member States and CELAC Member Countries into genuine allies through the strategic partnership initiated in 2023.

With an eye on the forthcoming CELAC-EU Summit, the Ministers, Attorneys General, Presidents of Supreme Courts, Secretaries-General of International Organisations, and other High Representatives gathered in Lima have firmly committed to prioritising the outlined lines of action to align structures and strategies within a broad common framework: **a partnership that protects.**