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**Review of implementation of the United Nations
Convention against Corruption**

Executive summary

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

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II. Executive summary

Latvia

1. Introduction: Overview of the legal and institutional framework of Latvia in the context of implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption

The United Nations Convention against Corruption was signed on 19 May 2005 and ratified on 4 January 2006. Latvia deposited its instrument of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 5 June 2009.

Latvia's legal framework against corruption includes provisions from the Constitution, the Criminal Law (CL) and the Criminal Procedure Law (CPL). It further contains specific legislation such as the Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, the Law on Special Protection of Persons, the Law on Punishment Records, the Law on Credit Institutions, the Law on Compensation of Damages, the State Civil Service Law, the Law on Disciplinary Liability of Civil Servants and the Investigatory Operations Law.

Latvia has also put in place a well-structured institutional framework to address corruption with emphasis on the independent function of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau (KNAB).

2. Chapter III: Criminalization and law enforcement

2.1. Observations on the implementation of the articles under review

Bribery and trading in influence (arts. 15, 16, 18 and 21)

Active and passive bribery of national public officials are criminalized through sections 323 and 320 CL respectively, both as amended on 1 April 2013.

Through the amendment on the wording of section 323 CL, the phrase "if the offer is accepted", contained in the previous version of the section, was deleted, thus enabling the criminalization of promise or offer of a bribe as a completed offence.

Section 316 CL provides for a definition of a "public official" to include "representatives of State authority, as well as every person who permanently or temporarily performs his or her duties in the State or local government service and who has the right to make decisions binding on other persons, or who has the right to perform any functions regarding supervision, control, inquiry, or punishment or to deal with the property or financial resources of the State or local government, shall be considered to be State officials". The expression "representatives of state authority" refers to persons exercising some form of public power, whether this is legislative, executive or judicial.

Both sections 320 and 323 CL make reference to the performance of acts or failure to perform an act by a public official "using his or her official position", in compliance with the term "in the exercise of duties" used in article 15 of the Convention against Corruption.

The said provisions also refer to "bribes" which are defined as "material values, properties or benefits of other nature". "Benefits of another nature" also cover immaterial advantages.

Both sections 320 and 323 CL refer explicitly to situations in which the offence is committed directly or through an intermediary, as does section 326.2 CL. Section 322 CL criminalizes the acting as an intermediary, in bad faith, between the bribe-giver and the bribe-taker. Third-party beneficiaries are covered in both sections 323 and 320 CL.

Paragraph 3 of section 316 CL stipulates that “as State officials shall also be considered foreign public officials, members of foreign public assemblies, officials of international organizations, members of international parliamentary assemblies, as well as international court judges and officials”. Accordingly, the elements of the offence and the applicable sanctions detailed under bribery of national public officials also apply to bribery of foreign public officials.

Active bribery in the private sector is criminalized in section 199 CL on “commercial bribery”, whereas passive bribery in the private sector is criminalized in section 198 on “unauthorized receipt of benefits”.

Trading in influence, both in its active and passive forms, is criminalized by section 326.1 CL. This provision does not require that the influence was actually exerted or that the desired results were achieved. The review team highlighted as a good practice that the said provision has a broader scope than article 18 of the Convention against Corruption, as it refers not only to the unlawful use of influence, but also the use of official, professional or social position of the influence peddler.

Money-laundering, concealment (arts. 23 and 24)

The laundering of proceeds of crime is defined in section 5 of the Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing. The scope of the domestic definition of money-laundering was found by the reviewers to be in compliance with article 23 of the Convention against Corruption.

Furthermore, the conduct of laundering of proceeds of crime is criminalized in sections 195 and 314 (acquisition and sale of property obtained by way of crime) CL, the latter being amended in April 2013. The participation in any form in the commission of money-laundering is criminalized through the general provisions of the CL on participation (sections 19 and 20). Latvia has adopted an “all crimes” approach to defining predicate offences for money-laundering purposes, including offences committed outside the Latvian territory under the condition of double criminality. Self-laundering is also criminalized.

Concealment without the participation in the predicate offence is covered by article 313 CL (concealing without prior promise), which is in compliance with article 24 of the Convention against Corruption.

Embezzlement, abuse of functions and illicit enrichment (arts. 17, 19, 20 and 22)

The criminalization of embezzlement in the public sector is accomplished through the combined application of the provision on misappropriation of property in the private sector (section 179 CL) and sections 318, paragraph 2, CL on “using official position in bad faith”, as amended in April 2013, and section 319 CL on “failure to act by a state official”. Section 180 CL can also be applied where the misappropriation takes place on a small scale.

The reviewers argued in favour of putting in place ad hoc criminalization provisions to cover acts of embezzlement, misappropriation or diversion of property by a public official. This is also because the analogous application of provisions on the abuse of functions may lead to the establishment of criminal responsibility for diversion of property by a public official only when the acts have caused major damage (see below), while the Convention does not foresee this requirement. The reviewing experts called on the Latvian authorities to introduce, for purposes of legal certainty, ad hoc provisions criminalizing the embezzlement, misappropriation or other diversion of property made by a public official.

The abuse of functions is criminalized through sections 318, as amended in April 2013, and 319 CL. Both sections 318 and 319 refer, as a condition for criminalization, to the causing of “substantial harm to state authority, administrative order or interests of a person protected by law”.

The review team, bearing in mind the optional wording of article 19 of the Convention against Corruption, noted that the notion of “damage” was not a constituent element of the offence, as described in article 19. This additional restriction of the domestic legislation may result in non-criminalization of acts of abuse of office by which no damage was caused. Therefore the review team recommended that the national authorities explore the possibility of construing legislation in a way that allows for the criminalization of abuse of functions regardless of the damage caused and in line with the requirements foreseen in article 19 of the Convention against Corruption.

The Latvian authorities reported on domestic provisions containing elements which are of some relevance for the domestication of article 20 of the Convention against Corruption (although no ad hoc provision on the criminalization of illicit enrichment per se exists). These provisions include section 219 (avoiding submission of declaration of income, property or transactions or other declaration of a financial nature); section 326 (unlawful participation in property transactions); and (specifically for public officials) section 325 (violation of restrictions imposed on a state official) CL, as amended in April 2013. It was clarified during the country visit that the State Revenue Service has an automated system that analyses the discrepancies between income and expenses. Any discrepancies have to be justified by the person concerned who has to provide proof on the licit origin of his or her income.

Obstruction of justice (art. 25)

Section 301 CL domesticates article 25 (a) of the Convention against Corruption adequately. This provision criminalizes the conduct of a person who commits bribing or “otherwise illegally influencing” a participant in criminal proceedings for the purpose of, inter alia, compelling him or her to give false testimony or to refrain from giving testimony to a court. The phrase “otherwise illegally influencing” seems to cover the coercive means mentioned in article 25 (a) of the Convention against Corruption as well, which, in any case, constitute aggravating circumstances foreseen in paragraphs 2 and 3 of section 301 CL.

Article 25 (b) of the Convention against Corruption is fully implemented through sections 295 and 294 CL, as both amended in April 2013, dealing with illegal interference in a trial and the pretrial criminal proceedings respectively.

Liability of legal persons (art. 26)

Latvia's legislation provides for the criminal liability of legal persons by enabling the application of coercive measures against them. Through amendments of sections 70-78 CL, which entered into force on 1 April 2013, Latvia introduced more detailed provisions on the criminal liability of legal persons, including State or local government capital companies or partnerships. The coercive measures that can be imposed to legal persons include liquidation, restriction of rights, confiscation of property and monetary levy.

Participation and attempt (art. 27)

Participation in the commission of corruption-related offences, as well as attempts to commit them, are covered by the general provisions of the CL on participation (sections 19 and 20) and completed and uncompleted criminal offences (section 15).

Prosecution, adjudication and sanctions; cooperation with law enforcement authorities (arts. 30 and 37)

In general, the sanctions for corruption-related offences appear to be sufficiently dissuasive. The reviewers noted, however, that the amendments of the CL of April 2013 brought about a couple of changes in relation to the sanctioning of some of these offences, which seem to create some inconsistencies in the overall sanctioning system and the inter-relationship between basic and aggravated forms of corruption-related offences. The review team invited the Latvian authorities to ensure that legislative anti-corruption action does not affect the consistency and coherence of the existing sanctioning system of the criminal law provisions which are applicable in the fight against corruption.

In relation to the extent and scope of immunities from prosecution, section 120 CPL stipulates that the State President and members of the Parliament (Saeima) enjoy immunity from criminal proceedings, as specified in the Constitution. The President may be subject to criminal liability if the Saeima consents thereto by a majority of not less than two thirds (section 54 of the Constitution). Members of the Saeima cannot be arrested, nor can their premises be searched, nor can their personal liberty be restricted in any way without the consent of the Saeima. However, its members may be arrested if apprehended in the act of committing a crime. Without the consent of the Saeima, criminal prosecution may not be commenced and administrative fines may not be levied against its members (section 30 of the Constitution).

Judges enjoy immunity during the time they fulfil their duties. A criminal procedure against a judge may only be initiated by the Prosecutor General. A decision concerning the detention of, forcible conveyance, arrest or subjection to a search of a judge is taken by a Supreme Court justice specially authorized for that purpose.

The reviewing experts noted the decisive role of the Saeima in lifting the immunities of its members. In order to avoid the potential risk that during the time it takes to lift the immunity evidence could disappear or be tampered with, legislative measures were recommended to ensure that investigative action aimed at securing evidence is allowed before the lifting of immunity and that procedural immunity is narrowed to only criminal prosecution and would not be applicable to pretrial investigation stage.

The prosecutorial and investigating authorities have to initiate criminal investigations whenever the features of criminal offence are detected. Nevertheless, the CPL provides the prosecutors with discretionary powers by enabling them to enter into agreements (form of plea-bargaining agreements), on the basis of own initiative or on the initiative of an accused or his or her defence counsel, regarding the admission of guilt and punishment (chapter 38, sections 433-438 CPL).

KNAB has powers to impose administrative sanctions for violations of provisions on conflicts of interest and funding of political parties. In a more specific context, section 39 of the State Civil Service Law provides for the suspension from the performance of duties where detention has been applied as a security measure or criminal prosecution has been initiated against the public official. The procedure for exercising disciplinary powers is stipulated by the Law on Disciplinary Liability of Civil Servants.

Protection of witnesses and reporting persons (arts. 32 and 33)

Latvia has put in place a comprehensive legal framework for the protection of witnesses, based on provisions of the CPL and the specific Law on Special Protection of Persons. Among the persons protected are the victims, witnesses or other persons who testify or have testified regarding a serious or especially serious crime (section 4, paragraph 1, of the Law).

The basis for special procedural protection is the existence of a real threat to life, health or property of a person, expressed real threats, or information that provides a person directing the proceedings with a sufficient basis for believing that a threat may be real in connection with the testimony provided by such person (section 300, paragraph 1 CPL). Sections 308 and 309 CPL deal with the evidentiary rules allowing witnesses and experts to give testimony before the court in a manner that ensures their safety.

Despite the existence of provisions of labour law on the protection of employees who report suspicions with regard to the commission of criminal offences, there is still no ad hoc legislation in Latvia ensuring their protection, as set forth in article 33 of the Convention against Corruption. Taking into account the non-binding nature of this provision of the Convention, the reviewers encouraged the Latvian authorities to explore the possibility of putting in place a comprehensive and focused legal framework on the protection of reporting persons.

Freezing, seizing and confiscation; bank secrecy (arts. 31 and 40)

The Latvian legal system has provisions in place to enable the identification, tracing, freezing or seizure of property associated with criminal activity for the purpose of eventual confiscation (section 361 CPL on the “imposition of an attachment on property”). All realizable property can be frozen, including property transferred to other parties. In emergency situations, the Prosecutor can appoint a person to attach the property.

Article 42 CL provides for the confiscation of property, both movable and immovable, as a penalty imposed upon conviction which is applied to property that belongs to the sentenced person or has been transferred to another natural or legal person. Article 240 CPL deals with the confiscation of instrumentalities of crime.

Under section 356 CPL, property upon which an attachment is imposed may be left in storage with the owner or user thereof, his or her family members, or another person. If such property cannot be left in storage with the aforementioned persons, it is handed over for storage to the institutions specified by the Cabinet of Ministers.

According to 355 CPL, the burden of proof in confiscation proceedings rests with the prosecution. At the time of the country visit, Latvia was working on amendments to existing legislation to reverse the burden of proof. In future, the person will have the burden of proof that the origin of the property is legally acquired. Amendments will enter into force approximately mid-2014.

In accordance with section 121, paragraph 5 CPL, bank accounts can be monitored, and information contained therein can be disclosed only with the decision of an investigating judge. Bank documents are subject to disclosure to a number of different state agencies, including the Prosecutor, if approved by the investigating judge under section 63 of the Law on Credit Institutions.

Statute of limitations; criminal record (arts. 29 and 41)

Pursuant to section 56 CL, the statute of limitations period for corruption offences ranges from five years to ten and fifteen years. The limitation period runs from the day of the commission of the offence and refers only to the investigation time. Once the prosecution phase starts, then the statute of limitations stops. This was viewed by the reviewers as having a much more effective impact on the proper administration of justice than the suspension of the statute of limitations period, which is not foreseen in Latvian legislation.

Latvia reported compliance with article 41 of the Convention against Corruption and specifically the establishment in April 2012 of the computerized system ECRIS to achieve efficient exchange of information on criminal convictions among the member States of the European Union. Since 2005, the Law on Punishment Records is in force and regulates that information about criminal offences and administrative violations is stored at the Information Centre of the Ministry of Interior.

Jurisdiction (art. 42)

Jurisdiction principles, including rules of territoriality and active and passive personality, are established in sections 2-4 CL. Jurisdiction is also established over offences committed against the State. It should be noted that dual criminality is not required for the establishment of jurisdiction in respect of acts committed abroad. Section 4, paragraph 4 CL provides for extraterritorial jurisdiction over an offence committed outside the national territory, in the cases provided for in international agreements by which Latvia is bound “irrespective of the laws of the State in which the offence has been committed”.

Latvian legislation has no separate provisions stipulating that criminal proceedings have to be opened if the extradition is denied. However, the opening of investigation is mandatory if there is information indicating that an offence has been committed. This a general rule, stipulated in sections 6 and 371 CPL, and as such is applicable.

Consequences of acts of corruption; compensation for damage (arts. 34 and 35)

The Procurement Monitoring Bureau (an institution under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance) has the right to suspend the further implementation of a contract if violations of procurement procedure have been detected.

Section 22 CPL guarantees the rights of a victim to compensation for the damage and financial loss derived from a criminal offence. Section 350 CPL provides for the procedure that should be in place to materialize this right. Moreover, the Law on Compensation of Damages caused by the institutions of public administration was adopted in 2005.

Specialized authorities and inter-agency coordination (arts. 36, 38 and 39)

KNAB was established in October 2002 and has been fully operational since February 2003. As the only law enforcement body of an independent status, it mandates in the area of prevention of corruption and further carries out anti-corruption investigations and operative work within its authority. It also monitors the observance of regulations on the financing of political parties and their associations and has the right to draft and propose amendments to existing legislation, as well as to make draft laws. The Director of the Bureau is appointed by the Parliament for a term of five years. The review team welcomed the existence and work of this specialized body and considered its function as a good practice in the anti-corruption field.

Although there are no relevant records, the sharing of information was reported to take place on a regular basis at both the informal and formal levels. Section 395 CPL enables the conduct of “investigation in a group”. In practice, the KNAB and the Organized Crime Enforcement Department of the State police have jointly investigated corruption cases.

The Law on Credit Institutions provides for the obligation of credit institutions to disclose information at their disposal to State institutions and officials. However, in practice, it was observed that there is often caution to disclose information due to the fear that an intervention of the State police may lead to audits.

2.2. Successes and good practices

Overall, the following successes and good practices in implementing chapter III of the Convention are highlighted:

- The fact that the domestic provision on the criminalization of trading in influence has a broader scope than article 18 of the Convention against Corruption, as it refers not only to the unlawful use of influence, but also the use of official, professional or social position of the influence peddler;
- The comprehensive legal framework for the protection of witnesses;
- The competences and function of KNAB as a specialized anti-corruption authority.

2.3. Challenges in implementation

While noting the efforts of Latvia to harmonize the national legal system with the provisions of the Convention against Corruption on criminalization and law

enforcement, the reviewers identified some challenges in implementation and/or grounds for further improvement and made the following remarks, to be taken into account for action or consideration by the competent national authorities (depending on the mandatory or optional nature of the relevant Convention requirements):

- Introduce, for purposes of legal certainty, ad hoc provisions criminalizing the embezzlement, misappropriation or other diversion of property made by a public official;
- Explore the possibility of construing legislation in a way that allows for the criminalization of abuse of functions regardless of the damage caused and in line with the requirements foreseen in article 19 of the Convention;
- Taking into account the non-binding nature of article 33 of the Convention, explore the possibility of putting in place a comprehensive and focused legal framework on the protection of reporting persons;
- Ensure that legislative anti-corruption action does not affect the consistency and coherence of the existing sanctioning system of the criminal law provisions which are applicable in the fight against corruption;
- Take legislative measures to ensure that investigative action against members of the Saeima aimed at securing evidence of committing a criminal offence is allowed before the lifting of immunity takes place and that procedural immunity is narrowed to only criminal prosecution and would not be applicable to pretrial investigation stage.

3. Chapter IV: International cooperation

3.1. Observations on the implementation of the articles under review

Extradition; transfer of sentenced persons; transfer of criminal proceedings (arts. 44, 45 and 47)

A two-tier system on extradition has been put in place in Latvia. With regard to other member States of the European Union, the surrender of fugitives is carried out in line with the requirements of the European Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on the European Arrest Warrant and the surrender procedures between member States of the European Union.

The Convention against Corruption can be used as a legal basis for extradition if other regional instruments are not applicable. Extradition can also be granted on the basis of reciprocity (see section 675 CPL).

The threshold for determining the extraditable offences is one year of imprisonment if extradition is requested for prosecution or trial purposes and four months of a sentence (or remainder thereof) if extradition is requested for purposes of enforcement of a sentence, unless an international agreement provides otherwise (see section 697 CPL).

Chapters 65 and 66 of the CPL regulate the domestic extradition proceedings and the execution of European arrest warrants. The consideration of an extradition request involves both the competent judicial chamber of the Supreme Court and the responsible administrative authority (Cabinet of Ministers, on the basis of a proposal of the Minister of Justice).

The double criminality requirement, as a precondition for granting extradition, is provided for in section 696, paragraph 1 CPL. In interpreting whether double criminality is fulfilled, consideration is given to the conduct underlying the offence in question. In the European Arrest Warrant context, double criminality is not required for bribery and money-laundering offences punishable by deprivation of liberty of at least three years.

Pursuant to section 98 of the Constitution, “a citizen of Latvia may not be extradited to a foreign country, except in the cases provided for in international agreements ratified by the Saeima if by the extradition the basic human rights specified in the Constitution are not violated”.

Other grounds for refusal of extradition requests are set forth in section 697 CPL or in applicable international agreements. The fiscal nature of the offence is not a ground for refusal.

Typical extradition proceedings may take up to one year to be completed. The maximum detention for purposes of extradition is one year and cannot be prolonged. If the person sought agrees to extradition (simplified extradition — section 713 CPL), she or he can be extradited within three weeks. The simplified process is not applicable for Latvian citizens. In the case of European arrest warrants, the process is completed at the same day if the person is surrendered to Estonia and Lithuania and within 10-14 days to other EU member States. If the decision is appealed, the Supreme Court looks at the matter within 20 days. The maximum period of the surrender process should not exceed 90 days.

The conditional surrender of a Latvian citizen to the requesting State upon the condition of return to serve the sentence in Latvia is provided for in section 715, paragraph 3 CPL, and only in relation to the European arrest warrant procedure. If the extradition of a Latvian citizen is requested for purposes of enforcing a sentence, the domestic legal framework enables the execution of the sentence in Latvia (see chapters 70 and 71 of the CPL).

Latvia has ratified the European Convention on Extradition and its three Additional Protocols and has further concluded bilateral extradition treaties with Australia, Canada, the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

Despite the availability of piecemeal statistics for the years 2010-2012, the Latvian authorities acknowledged that there was no database to systematically compile statistical data on extradition cases. However, it was reported that an information system for a database on legal assistance requests was in the planning process. The reviewing experts urged the national authorities to continue efforts to put in place such an information system and make it fully operational.

The transfer of sentenced persons is based on the domestic legal framework regulating the execution of a foreign criminal judgement in Latvia (mentioned above). Latvia is a State party to the European Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons and its Additional Protocol, as well as the European Convention on the International Validity of Criminal Judgments and the Convention between the member States of the European Communities on the Enforcement of Foreign Criminal Sentences.

Chapter 67 of the CPL regulates issues pertaining to the transfer of criminal proceedings. Latvia is a State party to the European Convention on the Transfer of Proceedings in Criminal Matters.

Mutual legal assistance (art. 46)

Mutual legal assistance can be afforded for a wide range of measures in relation to investigations, prosecutions and judicial proceedings. In terms of the applicable domestic legal framework, chapter 54 of the CPL regulates issues pertaining to “international cooperation in the criminal legal field”, whereas chapter 82 focuses on the assistance to a foreign State in the “performance of procedural actions”. Latvia can use the Convention against Corruption on the understanding that no regional instrument applies in a given case.

The execution of MLA requests involving coercive measures is subject to the double criminality requirement (section 852 CPL).

In executing MLA requests, the criminal procedure of the requesting State may be applied if such necessity has been justified in the request and if such application is not in contradiction to the basic principles of the domestic criminal procedure (section 674, paragraph 2 CPL).

Section 850 CPL provides for the grounds for refusal of executing a request for assistance. Bank secrecy is not included among the grounds for refusal; neither the fiscal nature of the offence constitutes a reason to deny such assistance (see also article 1 of the Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters).

The Ministry of Justice is the competent authority when the MLA request is based on the Convention against Corruption. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has been notified accordingly. The Prosecutor General’s Office is responsible for requests submitted under the Council of Europe instruments. It is also exclusively responsible for the extradition requests.

Similarly to extradition, the reviewing experts indicated the lack of a systematic approach to gather statistics in the field of MLA and took note of the reported efforts to put in place an information system on legal assistance.

Latvia has ratified the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and its two Additional Protocols, as well as the 2000 EU Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters. Bilateral MLA agreements have been concluded with Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, the United States of America and Uzbekistan.

Law enforcement cooperation; joint investigations; special investigative techniques (arts. 48, 49 and 50)

Law enforcement cooperation, including exchange of information, is facilitated through the Schengen Information System and INTERPOL. The Financial Intelligence Unit is entrusted with the provision of secure information about suspicious transactions to foreign counterparts.

Latvia has implemented the Council Decision 2007/845/JHA on the establishment by member States of the European Union of Asset Recovery Offices for the

exchange of information concerning assets owned by persons under investigation. Latvia is also member of the Camden Assets Recovery Interagency Network.

Latvia has signed bilateral (with Estonia, Lithuania and Poland) and multilateral agreements on direct cooperation with foreign law enforcement agencies. The Convention against Corruption is considered as a legal basis for law enforcement cooperation in respect of the offences covered by the Convention.

Chapter 84 of the CPL sets forth the rules for establishing joint investigation teams for the performance of concrete investigative action.

The CPL (chapter 11) and the Investigatory Operations Law provide for the possibility of making use of special investigative techniques. Latvia is a party to the Schengen agreement which provides for cross-border surveillance activities, use of controlled deliveries and covert investigations. The EU Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters also provides for the use of controlled deliveries and covert investigations.

3.2. Successes and good practices

The implementation of a comprehensive and coherent domestic legislation on international cooperation in criminal matters was regarded by the reviewers as a good practice.

3.3. Challenges in implementation

The following points are brought to the attention of the Latvian authorities for their action or consideration (depending on the mandatory or optional nature of the relevant requirements of the Convention) with a view to enhancing international cooperation to combat offences covered by the Convention:

- Continue to explore opportunities to actively engage in bilateral treaties or agreements with foreign countries (particularly non-European countries), with the aim to enhance the effectiveness of different forms of international cooperation;
- Continue efforts to put in place — and make fully operational — an information system that would compile in a systematic manner information on extradition and MLA cases, with a view to facilitating the monitoring of such cases and assessing in a more efficient manner the effectiveness of implementation of international cooperation arrangements.