

Director of Europol **Rob Wainwright**:

Welcome. It's an honour to participate in the opening of the Slovenian National Bureau of Investigation.

Great to see the establishment of a dynamic, new law enforcement agency – this will strengthen the law enforcement community in the EU.

I am impressed by the mandate of the NBI. I am sure it will allow Slovenia to improve its fight against OC. I also recognise similarities with Europol. We share the mission of combating organised crime, cyber crime and other complex crimes. Europol and NBI have much in common regarding investigation techniques. We both focus on financial investigations with the purpose of identifying, tracking and securing proceeds from crime.

This is the right approach to defeat OC. These days, OC activities are committed through complex business transactions with a strong international dimension. The scale of OC is rising which makes institutions such as the NBI indispensable in the crime fighting arena.

I was also impressed to learn that a complex comparative analysis was conducted of similar agencies in the EU prior to the set up of the NBI. This shows that international cooperation and exchanging best practice bring about excellent results. Through our work at the centre of international police cooperation in the EU, we promote the development of common instruments and standards if fighting OC. The NBI is an excellent example of the application of such best practice.

At Europol we are also undergoing some changes. Europol became an EU agency on 1 January 2010

- New operational capabilities
 - Wider competence (serial killer)
 - New information databases, more intelligence collection (from third parties, private sector)
- New profile
 - At the heart of the EU
 - More open and accessible
 - Cooperation between agencies quicker, less bureaucracy
- Benefits for citizens
 - Stronger Europol = better protection against OC and TE threats
 - More open and accountable under the ECD – more legitimacy.

It is my privilege to oversee development of Europol into a stronger operational force in Europe.

Today I see the establishment of a ready-made partner in Slovenia – the emergence of a powerful new agency which will act as a positive example in the region in the fight against OC. I am sure we will see many successes from the new agency. Building on previous international operations, such as GASOLINE, a major case in 2009 involving Slovenia, Italy and Europol, which disrupted a dangerous criminal network involved in drug trafficking and other offences. Over 30 persons were arrested and large quantity of illicit drugs was seized.

With the establishment of NBI, Slovenia's fight against OC has grown even stronger. I applaud the Government's decision to establish the Agency. I wish my Slovenian colleagues every success in the new venture and pledge Europol's total support for the new Agency.