

## COUNCIL ACT

of 19 June 1997

## drawing up the Second Protocol of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests

(97/C 221/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article K.3 (2) (c) thereof,

Whereas, for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the Union, the Member States regard the combating of crime damaging the European Communities' financial interests as a matter of common interest coming under the cooperation provided for in Title VI of the Treaty;

Whereas by its Act of 26 July 1995 <sup>(1)</sup> the Council drew up, as a first agreement, the Convention on the protection of the Communities' financial interests which is intended more specifically to combat fraud that damages those interests;

Whereas by its Act of 27 September 1996 <sup>(2)</sup> the Council drew up, as a second stage, a protocol to the Convention directed in particular at acts of corruption that involve national and Community officials and damage or are likely to damage the European Communities' financial interests;

Whereas the Convention needs to be further supplemented by a second protocol directed in particular at the liability of legal persons, confiscation, money laundering and the cooperation between the Member States and the Commission for the purpose of protecting the European Communities' financial interests and protecting personal data related thereto;

DECIDES that the Second Protocol, the text of which is set out in the Annex hereto and which is signed today by the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the Union, is hereby drawn up;

RECOMMENDS that it be adopted by the Member States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.

Done at Luxembourg, 19 June 1997.

*For the Council*

*The President*

M. DE BOER

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 316, 27. 11. 1995, p. 48.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No C 313, 23. 10. 1996, p. 1.

## ANNEX

## SECOND PROTOCOL,

drawn up on the basis of Article K.3 of the treaty on European Union, to the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests

THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES to this Protocol, Member States of the European Union,

REFERRING to the Act of the Council of the European Union of 19 June 1997;

DESIRING to ensure that their criminal laws contribute effectively to the protection of the financial interests of the European Communities;

RECOGNIZING the importance of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests of 26 July 1995 in combating fraud affecting Community revenue and expenditure;

RECOGNIZING the importance of the Protocol of 27 September 1996 to the said Convention in the fight against corruption damaging or likely to damage the European Communities' financial interests;

AWARE that the financial interests of the European Communities may be damaged or threatened by acts committed on behalf of legal persons and acts involving money laundering;

CONVINCED of the need for national law to be adapted, where necessary, to provide that legal persons can be held liable in cases of fraud or active corruption and money laundering committed for their benefit that damage or are likely to damage the European Communities' financial interests;

CONVINCED of the need for national law to be adapted, where necessary, to penalize acts of laundering of proceeds of fraud or corruption that damage or are likely to damage the European Communities' financial interests and to make it possible to confiscate proceeds of such fraud and corruption;

CONVINCED of the need for national law to be adapted, where necessary, in order to prevent the refusal of mutual assistance solely because offences covered by this Protocol concern or are considered as tax or customs duty offences;

NOTING that cooperation between Member States is already covered by the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests of 26 July 1995, but that there is a need, without prejudice to obligations under Community law, for appropriate provision also to be made for cooperation between member States and the Commission to ensure effective action against fraud, active and passive corruption and related money laundering damaging or likely to damage the European Communities' financial interests, including exchange of information between the Member States and the Commission;

CONSIDERING that, in order to encourage and facilitate the exchange of information, it is necessary to ensure adequate protection of personal data;

CONSIDERING that the exchange of information should not hinder ongoing investigations and that it is therefore necessary to provide for the protection of investigation secrecy;

CONSIDERING that appropriate provisions have to be drawn up on the competence of the Court of Justice of the European Communities;

CONSIDERING finally that the relevant provisions of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests of 26 July 1995 should be made applicable to certain acts covered by this Protocol,

HAVE AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONS:

### Article 1

#### Definitions

For the purposes of this Protocol:

- (a) 'Convention' shall mean the Convention drawn up on the basis of Article K.3 of the Treaty on European Union on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, of 26 July 1995 <sup>(1)</sup>;
- (b) 'fraud' shall mean the conduct referred to in Article 1 of the Convention;
- (c) — 'passive corruption' shall mean the conduct referred to in Article 2 of the Protocol drawn up on the basis of Article K.3 of the Treaty on European Union on the convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, of 27 September 1996 <sup>(1)</sup>,  
— 'active corruption' shall mean the conduct referred to in Article 3 of the same Protocol;
- (d) 'legal person' shall mean any entity having such status under the applicable national law, except for States or other public bodies in the exercise of State authority and for public international organizations;
- (e) 'money laundering' shall mean the conduct as defined in the third indent of Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC of 10 June 1991 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering <sup>(2)</sup>, related to the proceeds of fraud, at least in serious cases, and of active and passive corruption.

### Article 2

#### Money laundering

Each Member State shall take the necessary measures to establish money laundering as a criminal offence.

### Article 3

#### Liability of legal persons

1. Each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that legal persons can be held liable for fraud, active corruption and money laundering committed for their benefit by any person, acting either individually or as part of an organ of the legal person, who has a leading position within the legal person, based on

- a power of representation of the legal person, or
  - an authority to take decisions on behalf of the legal person, or
  - an authority to exercise control within the legal person,
- as well as for involvement as accessories or instigators in such fraud, active corruption or money laundering or the attempted commission of such fraud.
2. Apart from the cases already provided for in paragraph 1, each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that a legal person can be held liable where the lack of supervision or control by a person referred to in paragraph 1 has made possible the commission of a fraud or an act of active corruption or money laundering for the benefit of that legal person by a person under its authority.
3. Liability of a legal person under paragraphs 1 and 2 shall not exclude criminal proceedings against natural persons who are perpetrators, instigators or accessories in the fraud, active corruption or money laundering.

### Article 4

#### Sanctions for legal persons

1. Each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that a legal person held liable pursuant to Article 3 (1) is punishable by effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions, which shall include criminal or non-criminal fines and may include other sanctions such as:
- (a) exclusion from entitlement to public benefits or aid;
  - (b) temporary or permanent disqualification from the practice of commercial activities;
  - (c) placing under judicial supervision;
  - (d) a judicial winding-up order.
2. Each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that a legal person held liable pursuant to Article 3 (2) is punishable by effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions or measures.

### Article 5

#### Confiscation

Each Member State shall take the necessary measures to enable the seizure and, without prejudice to the rights of bona fide third parties, the confiscation or removal of the instruments and proceeds of fraud, active and passive corruption and money laundering, or property the value

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 316, 27. 11. 1995, p. 49.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 313, 23. 10. 1996, p. 2.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No L 166, 28. 6. 1991, p. 77.

of which corresponds to such proceeds. Any instruments, proceeds or other property seized or confiscated shall be dealt with by the Member State in accordance with its national law.

#### Article 6

##### Cooperation with the Commission of the European Communities

A Member State may not refuse to provide mutual assistance in respect of fraud, active and passive corruption and money laundering for the sole reason that it concerns or is considered as a tax or customs duty offence.

#### Article 7

##### Cooperation with the Commission of the European Communities

1. The Member States and the Commission shall cooperate with each other in the fight against fraud, active and passive corruption and money laundering.

To that end, the Commission shall lend such technical and operational assistance as the competent national authorities may need to facilitate coordination of their investigations.

2. The competent authorities in the Member States may exchange information with the Commission so as to make it easier to establish the facts and to ensure effective action against fraud, active and passive corruption and money laundering. The Commission and the competent national authorities shall take account, in each specific case, of the requirements of investigation secrecy and data protection. To that end, a Member State, when supplying information to the Commission, may set specific conditions covering the use of information, whether by the Commission or by another Member State to which that information may be passed.

#### Article 8

##### Data protection responsibility for the Commission

The Commission shall ensure that, in the context of the exchange of information under Article 7 (2), it shall observe, as regards the processing of personal data, a level of protection equivalent to the level of protection set out in Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection

of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data <sup>(1)</sup>.

#### Article 9

##### Publication of data protection rules

The rules adopted concerning the obligations under Article 8 shall be published in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

#### Article 10

##### Transfer of data to other Member States and third countries

1. Subject to any conditions referred to in Article 7 (2), the Commission may transfer personal data obtained from a Member State in the performance of its functions under Article 7 to any other Member State. The Commission shall inform the Member State which supplied the information of its intention to make such a transfer.

2. The Commission may, under the same conditions, transfer personal data obtained from a Member State in the performance of its functions under Article 7 to any third country provided that the Member State which supplied the information has agreed to such transfer.

#### Article 11

##### Supervisory authority

Any authority designated or created for the purpose of exercising the function of independent data protection supervision over personal data held by the Commission pursuant to its functions under the Treaty establishing the European Community, shall be competent to exercise the same function with respect to personal data held by the Commission by virtue of this Protocol.

#### Article 12

##### Relation to the Convention

1. The provisions of Articles 3, 5 and 6 of the Convention shall also apply to the conduct referred to in Article 2 of this Protocol.

2. The following provisions of the Convention shall also apply to this Protocol:

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No L 281, 23. 11. 1995, p. 31.

- Article 4, on the understanding that, unless otherwise indicated at the time of the notification provided for in Article 16 (2) of this Protocol, any declaration within the meaning of Article 4 (2) of the Convention, shall also apply to this Protocol,
- Article 7, on the understanding that the *ne bis in idem* principle also applies to legal persons, and that, unless otherwise indicated at the time the notification provided for in Article 16 (2) of this Protocol is being given, any declaration within the meaning of Article 7 (2), of the Convention shall also apply to this Protocol,
- Article 9,
- Article 10.

### Article 13

#### Court of Justice

1. Any dispute between Member States on the interpretation or application of this Protocol must in an initial stage be examined by the Council in accordance with the procedure set out in Title VI of the Treaty on European Union with a view to reaching a solution.

If no solution is found within six months, the matter may be referred to the Court of Justice by a party to the dispute.

2. Any dispute between one or more Member States and the Commission concerning the application of Article 2 in relation to Article 1 (e), and Article 7, 8, 10 and 12 (2), fourth indent of this Protocol which it has proved impossible to settle through negotiation may be submitted to the Court of Justice, after the expiry of a period of six months from the date on which one of the parties has notified the other of the existence of a dispute.

3. The Protocol drawn up on the basis of Article K.3 of the Treaty on European Union, on the interpretation, by way of preliminary rulings, by the Court of Justice of the European Communities of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, of 29 November 1996<sup>(1)</sup>, shall apply to this Protocol, on the understanding that a declaration made by a Member State pursuant to Article 2 of that Protocol is also valid regarding this Protocol unless the Member State concerned makes a declaration to the contrary when giving the notification provided for in Article 16 (2) of this Protocol.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ No C 151, 20. 5. 1997, p. 1.

### Article 14

#### Non-contractual liability

For the purposes of this Protocol, the non-contractual liability of the Community shall be governed by the second paragraph of Article 215 of the Treaty establishing the European Community. Article 178 of the same Treaty shall apply.

### Article 15

#### Judicial control

1. The Court of Justice shall have jurisdiction in proceedings instituted by any natural or legal person against a decision of the Commission addressed to that person or which is of direct and individual concern to that person, on ground of infringement of Article 8 or any rule adopted pursuant thereto, or misuse of powers.

2. Articles 168 a (1) and (2), 173, fifth paragraph, 174, first paragraph, 176, first and second paragraphs, 185 and 186 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, as well as the Statute of the Court of Justice of the European Community, shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*.

### Article 16

#### Entry into force

1. This Protocol shall be subject to adoption by the Member States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.

2. Member States shall notify the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union of the completion of the procedures required under their respective constitutional rules for adopting this Protocol.

3. This Protocol shall enter into force ninety days after the notification provided for in paragraph 2, by the State which, being a member of the European Union on the date of the adoption by the Council of the act drawing up this Protocol, is the last to fulfil that formality. If, however, the Convention has not entered into force on that date, this Protocol shall enter into force on the date on which the Convention enters into force.

4. However, the application of Article 7 (2) shall be suspended if, and for so long as, the relevant institution of the European Communities has not complied with its obligation to publish the data protection rules pursuant

to Article 9 or the terms of Article 11 concerning the supervisory authority have not been complied with.

#### Article 17

##### Accession of new Member States

1. This Protocol shall be open to accession by any State that becomes a member of the European Union.
2. The text of this Protocol in the language of the acceding State, drawn up by the Council of the European Union, shall be authentic.
3. Instruments of accession shall be deposited with the depositary.
4. This Protocol shall enter into force with respect to any State that accedes to it ninety days after the deposit of its instrument of accession or on the date of entry into force of this Protocol if it has not yet entered into force at the time of expiry of the said period of ninety days.

#### Article 18

##### Reservations

1. Each Member State may reserve the right to establish the money laundering related to the proceeds of active and passive corruption as a criminal offence only in serious cases of active and passive corruption. Any Member State making such a reservation shall inform the

depositary, giving details of the scope of the reservation, when giving the notification provided for in Article 16 (2). Such a reservation shall be valid for a period of five years after the said notification. It may be renewed once for a further period of five years.

2. The Republic of Austria may, when giving its notification referred to in Article 16 (2), declare that it will not be bound by Articles 3 and 4. Such a declaration shall cease to have effect five years after the date of the adoption of the act drawing up this Protocol.

3. No other reservations shall be authorized, with the exception of those provided for in Article 12 (2), first and second indent.

#### Article 19

##### Depositary

1. The Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union shall act as depositary of this Protocol.
2. The depositary shall publish in the *Official Journal of the European Communities* information on the progress of adoptions and accessions, declarations and reservations and any other notification concerning this Protocol.

EN FE DE LO CUAL, los plenipotenciarios abajo firmantes suscriben el presente Protocolo.

TIL BEKRÆFTELSE HERAF har undertegnede befuldmægtigede underskrevet denne protokol.

ZU URKUND DESSEN haben die Bevollmächtigten ihre Unterschriften unter dieses Protokoll gesetzt.

ΣΕ ΠΙΣΤΩΣΗ ΤΩΝ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΩ, οι υπογράφωντες πληρεξούσιοι έθεσαν την υπογραφή τους κάτω από το παρόν πρωτόκολλο.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries have hereto set their hands.

EN FOI DE QUOI, les plénipotentiaires soussignés ont apposé leurs signatures au bas du présent protocole.

DÁ FHIANÚ SIN, chuir na Lánchumhachtaigh thíos-sínithe a lámh leis an bPrótacal seo.

IN FEDE DI CHE, i plenipotenziari sottoscritti hanno apposto le loro firme in calce al presente protocollo.

TEN BLIJKE WAARVAN de ondergetekende gevolmachtigen hun handtekening onder dit protocol hebben gesteld.

EM FÉ DO QUE, os plenipotenciários abaixo assinados apuseram as suas assinaturas no presente protocolo.

TÄMÄN VAKUUDEKSI täysivaltaiset edustajat ovat allekirjoittaneet tämän pöytäkirjan.

TILL BEVIS HÄRPÅ har de befullmäktigade undertecknat detta protokoll.

Hecho en Bruselas, el diecinueve de junio de mil novecientos noventa y siete, en un ejemplar único, en lenguas alemana, danesa, española, finesa, francesa, griega, inglesa, irlandesa, italiana, neerlandesa, portuguesa y sueca, siendo cada uno de estos textos igualmente auténtico, que será depositado en los archivos de la Secretaría General del Consejo de la Unión Europea.

Udfærdiget i Bruxelles, den nittende juni nitten hundrede og syvoghalvfems, i ét eksemplar på dansk, engelsk, finsk, fransk, græsk, irsk, italiensk, nederlandsk, portugisisk, spansk, svensk og tysk, idet hver af disse tekster har samme gyldighed; de deponeres i arkiverne i Generalsekretariatet for Rådet for Den Europæiske Union.

Geschehen zu Brüssel am neunzehnten Juni neunzehnhundertsiebenundneunzig in einer Urschrift in dänischer, deutscher, englischer, finnischer, französischer, griechischer, irischer, italienischer, niederländischer, portugiesischer, schwedischer und spanischer Sprache, wobei jeder Wortlaut gleichermaßen verbindlich ist; die Urschrift wird im Archiv des Generalsekretariats des Rates der Europäischen Union hinterlegt.

Έγινε στις Βρυξέλλες, στις δέκαεννέα Ιουνίου χίλια εννιακόσια ενενήντα επτά, σε ένα μόνο αντίτυπο, στην αγγλική, γαλλική, γερμανική, δανική, ελληνική, ιρλανδική, ισπανική, ιταλική, ολλανδική, πορτογαλική, σουηδική και φινλανδική γλώσσα, όλα δε τα κείμενα είναι εξίσου αυθεντικά και κατατίθενται στα αρχεία της Γενικής Γραμματείας του Συμβουλίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Done at Brussels, this nineteenth day of June in the year one thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven, in a single original, in the Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Irish, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish languages, each text being equally authentic, such original remaining deposited in the archives of the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union.

Fait à Bruxelles, le dix-neuf juin mil neuf cent quatre-vingt-dix-sept en un exemplaire unique, en langues allemande, anglaise, danoise, espagnole, finnoise, française, grecque, irlandaise, italienne, néerlandaise, portugaise et suédoise, chacun de ces textes faisant également foi, exemplaire qui est déposé dans les archives du Secrétariat général du Conseil de l'Union européenne.

Arna dhéanamh sa Bhruiséil, an naoú lá déag de Mheitheamh sa bhliain míle naoi gcéad nócha a seacht, i scríbhinn bhunaidh amháin sa Bhéarla, sa Danmhairgis, san Fhionlainnis, sa Fhraincis, sa Ghaeilge, sa Ghearmáinis, sa Ghréigis, san Iodáilis, san Ollainnis, sa Phortaingéilis, sa Spáinnis agus sa tSualainnis agus comhúdarás ag na téacsanna i ngach ceann de na teangacha sin; déanfar an scríbhinn bhunaidh sin a thaisceadh i gcartlann Ardrúnaíocht Chomhairle an Aontais Eorpaigh.

Fatto a Bruxelles, il diciannove giugno millenovecentonovantasette, in un unico esemplare in lingua danese, finlandese, francese, greca, inglese, irlandese, italiana, olandese, portoghese, spagnola, svedese e tedesca, tutti i testi facenti ugualmente fede, esemplare depositato negli archivi del segretariato generale del Consiglio dell'Unione europea.

Gedaan te Brussel, de negentiende juni negentienhonderd zevenennegentig, opgesteld in één exemplaar in de Deense, de Duitse, de Engelse, de Finse, de Franse, de Griekse, de Ierse, de Italiaanse, de Nederlandse, de Portugese, de Spaanse en de Zweedse taal, zijnde alle teksten gelijkelijk authentiek, dat wordt nedergelegd in het archief van het Secretariaat-generaal van de Raad van de Europese Unie.

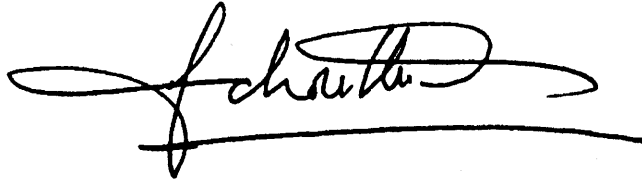
Feito em Bruxelas, em dezanove de Junho de mil novecentos e noventa e sete, em exemplar único, nas línguas alemã, dinamarquesa, espanhola, finlandesa, francesa, grega, inglesa, irlandesa, italiana, neerlandesa, portuguesa e sueca, fazendo igualmente fé todos os textos, depositado nos arquivos do Secretariado-Geral do Conselho da União Europeia.

Tehty Brysselissä yhdeksäntenätoista päivänä kesäkuuta vuonna tuhatyhdeksänsataayhdeksänkymmentäseitsemän yhtenä ainoana kappaleena englannin, espanjan, hollannin, iirin, italian, kreikan, portugalin, ranskan, ruotsin, saksan, suomen ja ranskan kielellä kaikkien näiden tekstien ollessa yhtä todistusvoimaiset, ja se talletetaan Euroopan unionin neuvoston pääsihteeristön arkistoon.

Utfärdat i Bryssel den nittonde juni nittonhundra nittiosju i ett enda exemplar på danska, engelska, finska, franska, grekiska, iriska, italienska, nederländska, portugisiska, spanska, svenska och tyska språken, vilka samtliga texter är lika giltiga, och detta original skall deponeras i arkiven hos generalsekretariatet för Europeiska unionens råd.



Pour le gouvernement du royaume de Belgique  
Voor de regering van het Koninkrijk België  
Für die Regierung des Königreichs Belgien



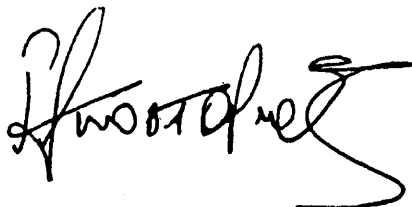
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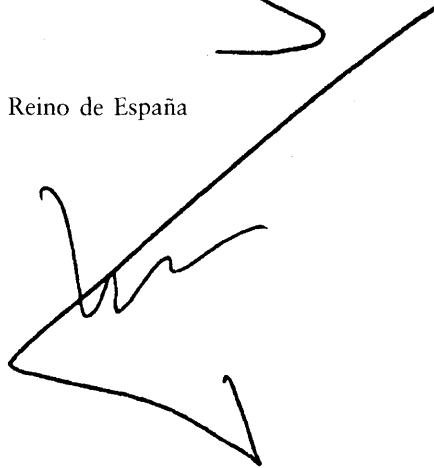
Für die Regierung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland



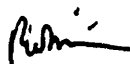
Για την κυβέρνηση της Ελληνικής Δημοκρατίας



Por el Gobierno del Reino de España



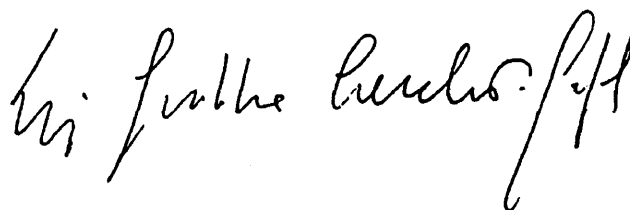
Pour le gouvernement de la République française



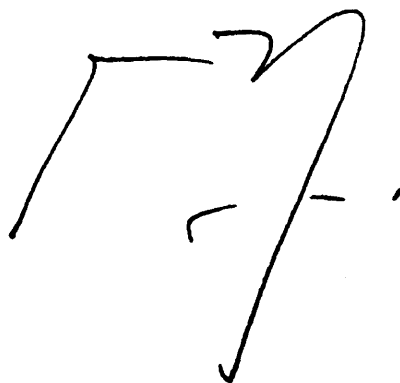
Thar ceann Rialtas na hÉireann  
For the Government of Ireland



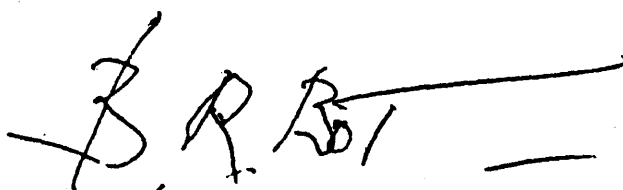
Per il governo della Repubblica italiana



Pour le gouvernement du grand-duché de Luxembourg



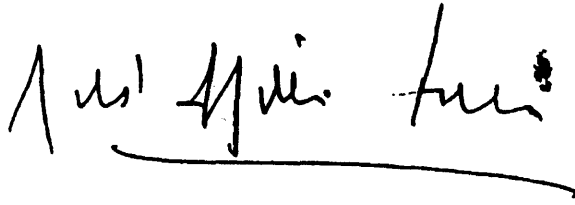
Voor de regering van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden



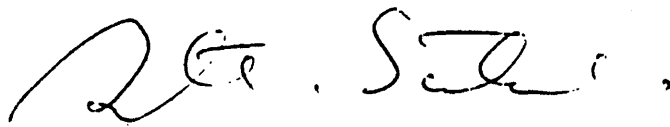
Für die Regierung der Republik Österreich



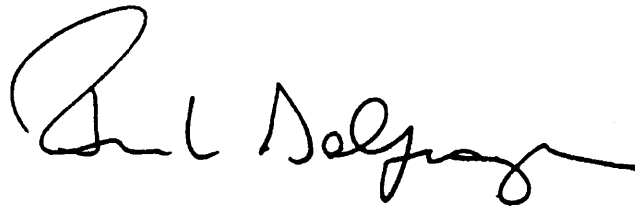
Pelo Governo da República Portuguesa



Suomen hallituksen puolesta  
På finska regeringens vägnar



På svenska regeringens vägnar



For the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

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**Joint Declaration on Article 13 (2)**

The Member States declare that the reference in Article 13 (2) to Article 7 of the Protocol shall apply only to cooperation between the Commission on the one hand and the Member States on the other and is without prejudice to Member States' discretion in supplying information in the course of criminal investigations.

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**Commission Declaration on Article 7**

The Commission accepts the tasks entrusted to it under Article 7 of the Second Additional Protocol to the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests.

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