

The Hague,	09/12/11
EDOC #	582708-v1
Unit	O5
Author	[...]
Phone	[...]

Speaking points

Operation Icarus press conference

Good morning, today we are meeting at Europol to report the results of a European operation against child sex offenders operating on the internet;

Before giving you the details of this operation called "Icarus", I would like to provide you with some background information about Europol's involvement in this specific area;

Europol widened its mandate in 2001 in order to, among other crime areas, start focusing on criminal networks involved in the production and dissemination of child abuse material;

Throughout these years Europol has coordinated around 25 high impact operations in addition to isolated transnational cases;

In particular some previous operations such as Koala and Rescue highlighted the prominent role of our organization in this particular field;

With the partial conclusion of Operation Icarus today we are sending out a clear message of "zero tolerance" against all forms of child sexual exploitation with particular attention to those perpetrated through the use of information and communication technologies;

Europol has since a long time committed to support the efforts of the law enforcement agencies in the Member States of the European Union and in the other partner countries;

Operation Icarus is a remarkable initiative because it is part of the so called "CIRCAMP" (COSPOL Internet Related Child Abuse Material Project) which is a European project funded by the European Commission and supported by Europol and Interpol;

In particular, CIRCAMP is currently led by Belgium (Belgian Federal Police) and, through its new action plan, several operations have been planned for the next two years with the support of Europol;

Operation Icarus is the first planned operation and it targeted internet users sharing child abusive material through a public file sharing system;

The case was led by Denmark (in particular the National High Tech Crime Unit) who provided Europol with intelligence packages for 25 European countries;

Europol organized an operational meeting on 21 September 2011 in order to distribute the intelligence packages to the investigators and the liaison officers from the concerned countries. At the meeting it was also agreed that Europol would be in charge of the exchange of information and the collection of the results for analysis purposes;

Europol guaranteed a fast and secure dissemination of the intelligence packages through the SIENA channel. In fact, in order to avoid problems related to data retention in some EU MS, Denmark performed the online investigation until a few days before the meeting and Europol disseminated all the packages to 25 involved countries within 24 hours;

Europol is at this stage receiving the feedback from the participating countries where most of the house searches have been positive (i.e. child abuse material has been confiscated). This information is currently being cross-matched with the data contained in our databases in order to discover if these offenders are members of already existing criminal networks or of previously unknown groups;

Europol will, on behalf of the sending country, also disseminate the child abuse material to Interpol for the inclusion in their International Child Sexual Exploitation Database, obviously when this has not been done by the country itself;

Europol will finally address Eurojust in case judicial assistance is required;

To date, 17 countries have reported positive results. So far 220 suspects have been identified (101 being arrested or detained in police custody). It is still premature to obtain information about the identification of victims although, in some cases, it has been reported about the arrest of child sex molesters;

Europol will continue supporting CIRCAMP for the possible development of new investigative threads originating from Icarus. The above figures are expected to grow in the next months. For this reason Europol will be in the position to provide an update of the case in the next months.

To conclude I would like to thank the Danish National Police and the Belgian Federal Police for the trust devoted to my agency and for the

excellent cooperation that has once again allowed the discovery and the arrest of such a consistent number of child sex offenders.

by
Rob Wainwright,
Director of EUROPOL

Note

So far 17* countries have reported positive results:

Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Cyprus
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Ireland
Luxembourg
Norway
Poland
Slovakia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland

Malta had one target but not actionable.
Croatia reported negative results.

*Provisional figure subject to change until the date of the press event