Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Thematic session 1: Increasing links between drug trafficking, corruption and other forms of organized crime

Jari Liukku
Head of Serious and Organised Crime Department
Operations Directorate, Europol
Table of contents

1. Investigations into High Risk Criminal Networks
2. Key characteristics and threats
3. Way forward
Investigations into High Risk Criminal Networks

OTF EMMA

Dismantling of an Encrypted Network Sends Shockwaves Through Organised Crime Groups Across Europe

Press Release

A joint press conference today, French and Dutch law enforcement and judicial authorities, Europol and Europol have presented the impressive results of a joint investigation named Dismantle Emma, an encrypted phone network widely used by criminal networks.

Over the last months, the joint investigation made it possible to intercept, share and analyse millions of messages that were exchanged between criminals to plan serious crimes. For an important part, these messages were read by law enforcement in real time, over the shoulder of the unsuspecting offenders.

The information has already been relevant in a large number of ongoing criminal investigations, resulting in the disruption of criminal activities including violent attacks, corruption, attempted murder and large drug transports. Certain messages included plans to commit imminent violent crimes andligated immediate action. The information will be further analysed as a source of unique insight, giving access to unprecedented volumes of new evidence to profoundly tackle organised criminal networks.

OTF LIMIT

NEW MAJOR INTERVENTIONS TO BLOCK ENCRYPTED COMMUNICATIONS OF CRIMINAL NETWORKS

As of February 2021, French and Dutch law enforcement authorities have launched major interventions to block the further use of encrypted communications by organised crime groups (OCGs), with the support of Europol.

The continuous monitoring of the criminal use of the Sky ECC communication service by investigators in the four countries involved has provided invaluable insights into hundreds of millions of messages exchanged between criminals. This has resulted in the collection of crucial information on a large number of planned large-scale criminal operations, preventing potential life-threatening situations and possible victims.

Following an action day on 2 March 2021, a large number of arrests were made, as well as numerous house searches and seizures in Belgium and the Netherlands. The operation is an essential part of the continuous efforts by the French and Dutch law enforcement in Belgium and the Netherlands to disrupt the large-scale use of encrypted communications, as was already deployed last year following the successful decryptions of the EnroChat communication platform.

As of mid-February, authorities have been able to monitor the information flow of approximately 70,000 users of Sky ECC. Over the past few months, the authorities have identified and disrupted a series of criminal activities involving the Sky ECC network.

OTF GREENLIGHT

800 CRIMINALS ARRESTED IN BIGGEST EVER LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATION AGAINST ENCRYPTED COMMUNICATION

As of February 2021, French and Dutch law enforcement authorities have launched major interventions to block the further use of encrypted communications by organised crime groups (OCGs), with the support of Europol.

The continuous monitoring of the criminal use of the Sky ECC communication service by investigators in the four countries involved has provided invaluable insights into hundreds of millions of messages exchanged between criminals. This has resulted in the collection of crucial information on a large number of planned large-scale criminal operations, preventing potential life-threatening situations and possible victims.

Following an action day on 2 March 2021, a large number of arrests were made, as well as numerous house searches and seizures in Belgium and the Netherlands. The operation is an essential part of the continuous efforts by the French and Dutch law enforcement in Belgium and the Netherlands to disrupt the large-scale use of encrypted communications, as was already deployed last year following the successful decryptions of the EnroChat communication platform.

As of mid-February, authorities have been able to monitor the information flow of approximately 70,000 users of Sky ECC. Over the past few months, the authorities have identified and disrupted a series of criminal activities involving the Sky ECC network.

By successfully unlocking the encryption of Sky ECC, the information acquired will provide insights into criminal activities in various EU Member States and beyond and will assist in expanding investigations and solving serious and crossborder criminal cases in the coming months, possibly years.
Investigations into High Risk Criminal Networks

Key crime areas identified during the investigations:

- Drugs trafficking
- Money laundering
- Extreme violence
- Corruption
- Firearms trafficking
- Fugitives
- Forgery of documents
- Property crime
- Cigarette smuggling
# Investigations into High Risk Criminal Networks

Criminal investigations are ongoing, but the results achieved and reported so far are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspects arrested</th>
<th>➢10.000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>158 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>4 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis</td>
<td>26 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthetic drugs</td>
<td>7.5 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precursors</td>
<td>14.5 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug labs</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms</td>
<td>1088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cigarettes</td>
<td>27 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash &amp; Cryptocurrencies</td>
<td>502 million EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets seized</td>
<td>92 million EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>78 boats, 40 planes, 635 luxury vehicles, 7 speedboats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate</td>
<td>272 real estate properties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key characteristics and threats

- Extensive profits
- Global networks
- Crime hubs
- Encrypted communication - new technologies
- Corruption
- Violence
- Polycriminality
Way forward

• **MS** with the support of Europol should ensure implementation of:
  - EU Strategies on Organized Crime, Drugs, Migrant Smuggling and THB
  - Practical EMPACT activities 2022-2025
  - High Value Target and Operational Task Force concept

• **Europol** should have legal possibility for efficient operational cooperation with third countries and private parties

• **MS’s and Europol’s operational actors** should have legal, technical and financial capacity for:
  - Real-time operational cooperation and secure information exchange
  - Joint processing of real-time large data sets on a common platform at Europol
  - Machine learning tools
  - Case management
  - Case-specific Cost-free Seconded National Experts
Thank you for your attention