



## PRESS RELEASE

### **PRES RO 2019: Joint meeting of senior EU and USA officials in the domains of internal affairs and justice**

In the context of Romania's holding of the presidency of the Council of the European Union, on Thursday, February the 28<sup>th</sup>, at the Palace of Parliament, the meeting took place in the form of senior EU-USA officials, whose main objective is the exchange of opinions about relevant issues in the justice and internal affairs.

The meeting also concerned preparing the ministerial meeting agenda of the EU-USA Dialogue to be held in June.

The EU-USA Dialogue on the External Dimension of Justice and Internal Affairs is a traditional one and takes place on a semi-annual basis during each rotating presidency of the EU Council.

On behalf of the EU, the participants in the dialogue are the Presidency-in-Office of the EU Council, the European Commission, the European External Action Service, and the General Secretariat of the Council, EUROPOL, EUROJUST, the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator and the future Council Presidency, namely Finland, as an observer. From US, senior officials from the Department of Internal Security, the Department of Justice, the State Department, took part.

The meeting in Bucharest was chaired by Mr. Cătălin Necula, Secretary of State within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Mr. Sebastian Constantin COSTEA, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice, and Mr. Alexandru Victor MICULA, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Regarding the domain of internal affairs, on the agenda of the meeting, the Romanian Presidency introduced topics related to further

cooperation and exchange of views with the USA in the fields of counter-terrorism, migration management and visa policy.

Regarding the fight against terrorism, discussions were held on the status of the EU-US PNR (Passenger Name Register) agreement, cooperation on combating online terrorist content, security threats, and information exchange.

With regard to migration and visa policy, issues related to combating smuggling, trafficking in migrants and the US visa policy have been dealt with in relation to the five EU non-reciprocal Member States visa.

Concerning the judicial dimension, the agenda of the meeting provided a framework for discussions on several topics of common interest, such as resilience of electoral systems, security and freedom in cyberspace, cross-border access to electronic evidence.

In the matter of international judicial cooperation, the existing challenges have been highlighted, including the ones with regard to third countries. Also, the data protection field has been approached from the perspective of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the implementation of the Umbrella Agreement.

The meeting was a good opportunity to strengthen legal relations between all parties involved.

At the same time, within the meeting was presented the program of the future Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of the year 2019.

**INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTORATE**