COMMISSIONER AVRAMOPOULOS APPLAUDS GRADUATES OF THE CEPOL EUROPEAN JOINT MASTER PROGRAMME IN BUDAPEST

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28 graduates of the CEPOL European Joint Master Programme (EJMP) have been awarded their diplomas today in the presence of the European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos at the graduation ceremony organised in Budapest, Hungary.

Three of them received special academic recognition for their outstanding results and excellent thesis defence: Paolo Cestra (Italy), Maria Montserrat Marin Lopez (Spain) and Natalja Prokofjeva (Latvia).

Representing 20 EU Member States, the group of EJMP graduates completed this summer a 2-year-long academic programme addressing common challenges of police cooperation in the frame of internal security. Organised for the second time by the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) in consortium with 21 partner academies, the master studies were divided into seven modules, implemented by seven different countries: Estonia, Italy, Finland, Hungary, Lithuania, Netherlands (together with the UK) and Romania.

Addressing the graduates at the ceremony, Commissioner, Dimitris Avramopoulos congratulated them for having worked hard and reaching this important step forward in their career, and thanked CEPOL staff for their guidance through this enriching process.

*The role of police officers is becoming vastly more important, more multi-faceted and more complex simply because today’s security environment does not stop at any border, is less predictable and more quickly evolving than at any time in recent memory. CEPOL can and will play a decisive role in ensuring security in EU and prepare police officers to do their jobs effectively’*– he underlined.

CEPOL Executive Director, **Detlef Schröder** emphasised on his pride arising from the excellent academic quality provided in the programme by dedicated partner universities:

*In the broad portfolio of training options our Agency provides, higher education at university level is a core element. It is an evidence CEPOL can deliver, complementary to the multi-fold operational hands-on activities, the highest-level academic qualifications together with its influential partner universities.*

Director-General of the Hungarian Ministry of Interior, **Károly Papp**, in his speech stressed a continuous need to invest further in the most critical value of the police services - their human resources.

Whereas the Rector of the Spanish National Distance Education University (UNED), **Ricardo Mairal Usón,**underlined the privilege of his institution to award the diplomas to the programme graduates.

**Sergio Felgueiras**, the Consortium leader, praised the programme for

*‘the opportunity to change the mindset of students with the knowledge they get.*

**Danijela** **Petković**, Deputy Chair of the CEPOL Management Board, wished the former students to

*be able to transfer gained knowledge contributing to the establishment of a European community of practice.*

The graduates’ spokesperson, **Hugo Cruz,**concluded on their behalf**:**

*More than receiving the diploma, our biggest aim is to be able to apply our knowledge for an effective and efficient international law enforcement cooperation and contribute to building a safer Europe*.