



European

Week for fighting

organized crime:

***Let's organise ourselves at European level
to fight a plague that threatens
sociality and economy and undermines democracy!***

In Europe, some 3,600 criminal groups and networks are involved in hideous organized crime trade, ranging from trafficking in human beings to smuggling, as well as weapons, drugs, rare animal species and cultural property trafficking, counterfeiting and smuggling of drugs. These are all potential sources of income for organized crime, transnational criminal organizations and terrorist groups.

The European Week for fighting organized crime, which was proposed both by the European Economic and Social Committee and the association Cultura contro Camorra, was held in Brussels under the patronage of the European Parliament from 16 to 19 November 2015.

It was a great success. The EU institutions actively participated, while civil society was heavily involved and political representatives at all levels extensively contributed to the debates.

Topics discussed on the first day turned around the role of civil society in the fight against organized crime and actions to counteract (especially the use of confiscated assets for social and cultural purposes). The second day was devoted to the economy and investments of organized crime across Europe with spotlights on a few specific illicit markets. During the last session, institutions and civil society crossed their viewpoints on different dimensions of the exploitation of human beings by organized crime.

Several cultural activities enlivened the European Week. The Bulgarian film "The lesson" was shown at the Istituto italiano di cultura in the presence of the Italian ambassador. The citizens' initiative of the French prices Falcone was presented and a debate was held on Pio La Torre on the theme "a statesman, for a more efficient fight and better instruments

at European level". The week ended with a tasting of products from confiscated businesses, organized by the NCO (Nueva Cooperazione Organizzata) and Legacoop at the Quincaillerie des Temps Présents in Ixelles.

Three major proposals have already emerged from this European Week:

- The EU institutions must leave their walls and be close to the citizens to show their support to honest people against organized crime; they should hold meetings in highly symbolic places where organized crime has recently been defeated or on the contrary still resists;
- Priority should be granted in the EU financing to structures (such as associations, cooperatives, municipalities, etc.) that manage confiscated properties or fight against organized crime with a view to compensate citizens who have suffered or suffer the effects of organized crime ;
- To keep the phenomenon under control, to exchange best practices and to be able to react immediately to any threat, a network of universities, research and / or training centers should be created in symbolic places of the fight against organized crime such as Casal di Principe, Limbadi, Corleone, Corsica, Marseille, ...

For its part, "Cultura contro camorra" will make every effort to open in Brussels a permanent sale point for products of companies confiscated from organized crime. The idea is to begin with those of the NCO (Nuova cooperazione organizzata) with a view to open it to other structures irrespective of their nationality.