



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
of the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units
The Hague, 13 June 2001

Recognising the international nature of money laundering;

Realising that in order to counter money laundering an increasing number of governments around the world have both imposed disclosure obligations on financial institutions and designated financial intelligence units, or "FIUs," to receive, analyse, and disseminate to competent authorities such disclosures of financial information;

Mindful of both the sensitive nature of disclosures of financial information and the value of the FIUs established to protect their confidentiality, analyse them, and refer them, as appropriate, to the competent authorities for investigation, prosecution, or trial;

Convinced that co-operation between and among FIUs across national borders both increases the effectiveness of individual FIUs and contributes to the success of the global fight against money laundering;

Understanding that effective international co-operation between and among FIUs must be based on a foundation of mutual trust;

Acknowledging the important role of international organisations and the various traditional national government agencies – such as Finance and Justice ministries, the police, and financial institution supervisory agencies – as allies in the fight against money laundering;

Having periodically convened plenary gatherings – known as Egmont Group Meetings¹ – to discuss issues common to FIUs and to foster such international co-operation among established FIUs, to assist and advise FIUs under development, and to co-operate with representatives of other government agencies and international organisations interested in the international fight against money laundering;

Having also agreed upon a definition of "Financial Intelligence Unit," completed a survey on the possibilities and modalities of information exchange, prepared a model Memorandum of Understanding for the exchange of information, created a secure Internet Web-site to facilitate information exchanges, and embarked upon several specific initiatives to develop the expertise and skills of the FIUs' staffs and to contribute to the successful investigation of matters within the FIUs' jurisdiction;

Aware that obstacles continue to limit information exchange and effective co-operation between some FIUs, and that those obstacles may include legal restrictions and/or the very nature of the FIUs themselves (– as administrative, judicial, or police); and

Convinced that there exists both significant potential for broad-based international co-operation among the FIUs and a critical need to enhance such co-operation,

The FIUs participating in the Egmont Group hereby resolve to encourage the development of FIUs and co-operation among and between them in the interest of combating money laundering.

To that end, we reaffirm our accession to the definition of Financial Intelligence Unit adopted at the plenary meeting of the Egmont Group in Rome in November 1996:

¹ Named after the Egmont-Arenberg palace in Brussels where the first such meeting was held on 9 June 1995.

“A central, national agency responsible for receiving (and, as permitted, requesting), analysing and disseminating to the competent authorities, disclosures of financial information

- (i) concerning suspected proceeds of crime, or*
- (ii) required by national legislation or regulation, in order to counter money laundering.”*

We also adopt the findings of the legal working group concerning the identification of those agencies that meet the FIU definition at the present time.

Henceforth, we agree that Egmont Group plenary meetings shall be convened by and for FIUs and other invited persons or agencies who are in a position to contribute to the goals of the Egmont Group. Egmont Group Participants shall include FIUs and other agencies representing governments that do not presently have FIUs. All other invited persons, agencies or international organisations shall be considered “Observers.”

We believe it is crucial to develop a network of information exchange on the basis of the *“Principles of Information Exchange Between Financial Intelligence Units for Money Laundering Cases”* as set forth in the Annex and incorporated herein by this reference.

We recognise the right of every FIU to subject co-operation to additional conditions as required by its national legislation.

We further agree to pursue as a priority, through the appropriate working groups and otherwise:

Determination of appropriate consequences that attend to an Egmont Group Participant’s status with respect to the definition of FIU adopted in Rome;

Development of FIUs in governments around the world;

Further stimulation of information exchange on the basis of reciprocity or mutual agreement;

Access to the Egmont Secure Web-site for all FIUs;

Continued development of training opportunities, regional/operational workshops, and personnel exchanges;

Consideration of a formal structure to maintain continuity in the administration of the Egmont Group, as well as consideration of a regular frequency and location for plenary meetings;

Articulation of more formal procedures by which decisions as to particular agencies’ status vis-à-vis the FIU definition are to be taken;

Designation of additional working groups, as necessary;

Development of appropriate modalities for the exchange of information;

Creation of Egmont Group sanctioned materials for use in presentations and communication to public audiences and the press about Egmont Group matters.

As originally approved in Madrid on 24 June 1997 and amended at The Hague on 13 June 2001.



***Principles for Information Exchange
Between Financial Intelligence Units
for Money Laundering Cases
The Hague, 13 June 2001***

A. Introduction

1. The Egmont Group works to foster the development of Financial Intelligence Units ("FIUs")² and information exchange.
2. The Egmont Group agreed in its Statement of Purpose, adopted in Madrid on 24 June 1997, to pursue among its priorities the stimulation of information exchange and to overcome the obstacles preventing cross-border information sharing.
3. Information-sharing arrangements should have the aim of fostering the widest possible co-operation between FIUs.
4. The following principles for information exchange among FIUs are meant to outline generally-shared concepts, while allowing countries necessary flexibility.

B. General Framework

5. International co-operation between FIUs in cases involving money laundering should be encouraged and based upon a foundation of mutual trust.
6. FIUs should take steps to seek information that may be used by other, identified, domestic law enforcement or financial supervisory agencies engaged in enforcement and related regulatory activities related to money laundering.
7. FIUs should work to encourage that national legal standards and privacy laws are not conceived so as to inhibit the exchange of information, in accordance with these principles, between or among FIUs.
8. Information-sharing arrangements must recognize and allow room for case-by-case solutions to specific problems.

C. Conditions for the Exchange of Information

9. FIUs should be able to exchange information freely with other FIUs on the basis of reciprocity or mutual agreement and consistent with procedures understood by the requested and requesting party. Such exchange, either upon request or spontaneously, should produce any available information that may be relevant to an analysis or investigation of financial transactions and other relevant information related to money laundering and the persons or companies involved.

². See definition in the Egmont Group "Statement of Purpose".

Annex To The Egmont Group “Statement Of Purpose”

10. An FIU requesting information should disclose, to the FIU that will process the request, at a minimum the reason for the request, the purpose for which the information will be used and enough information to enable the receiving FIU to determine whether the request complies with its domestic law.

D. Permitted Uses of Information

11. Information exchanged between FIUs may be used only for the specific purpose for which the information was sought or provided.
12. The requesting FIU may not transfer information shared by a disclosing FIU to a third party, nor make use of the information in an administrative, investigative, prosecutorial, or judicial purpose without the prior consent of the FIU that disclosed the information.

E. Confidentiality – Protection of Privacy

13. All information exchanged by FIUs must be subjected to strict controls and safeguards to ensure that the information is used only in an authorized manner, consistent with national provisions on privacy and data protection. At a minimum, exchanged information must be treated as protected by the same confidentiality provisions as apply to similar information from domestic sources obtained by the receiving FIU.