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Address at the round table "Blood-feud and challenges of justice" organised by

The General Prosecution Office

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The blood feud phenomenon is a complex (multifaceted) one and to be tackled needs a comprehensive approach. Among others, and most importantly, it involves a security aspect where the police plays a very important role in identifying, preventing and investigating the cases of blood feud related crimes. Blood feud related crimes are preventable, by means of intelligence led policing. Improving intelligence led policing is one of the aspects PAMECA IV has focused its support on.

Cooperation of the police with the community, is also contributing to preventing such crimes if done properly and with mutual trust. This community-police relation will have a positive effect in reducing cases of threat, incitement and murder for blood-feud, all three criminal offences envisaged in the Albanian Criminal Code.

Within PAMECA IV mandate, under the Community Policing and Human Rights component we will stress the importance of creating trust and deepening the interaction of the police with the local communities in identifying, preventing and investigating on such cases where the cooperation between the police and the prosecution also comes into play. Cooperation between the police and the prosecution has always been in the focus of EU projects providing assistance to law enforcement in Albania. The GPO is now one of the two main beneficiaries of PAMECA IV and has a say in the activities that will be carried out during the three years' lifetime of the project, which is yet another guarantee for the continued and strengthened cooperation between the police and the prosecution.

Uncontrolled access to weapons has become apparently a problem in the Albanian society, which doubtlessly contributes to the scale and gravity of this problem. In the framework of the general legislative reform being conducted by technical working groups within the Albanian State Police, the law on arms and the use of firearms are being redrafted with the aim of coming up with new legislation in this field. PAMECA IV team is fully involved in assisting all the ASP reform working groups and especially this particular WG working on the law on arms and use of firearms where there is also EU acquis involved.

Social isolation which the blood feud creates, is a human rights issue, with which the whole society should concern itself. I am pleased to see that representatives from the media and the civil society are all gathered around this table sharing their views and concern over such a sharp and painful problem for the Albanian society. The more stakeholders are involved and the more awareness is raised on this issue, the easier it will become to address, lessen its negative effects and yes, try to completely eradicate it. No society is completely free from such acts of violence, but developed and democratic societies strive to give an end to such 'self-judgement' practices and build rule of law countries.