

What are the US and EU doing together in the fight against international drugs trade? Interview with Jim Allen, Regional Director Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) – Europe & Africa – 12 May 2016

TRANSCRIPT

My name is Jim Allen and I am currently the Regional Director for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) for all of Europe and all of Africa.

One of the things that we have recently joined with our European partners a program or a legal concept that they have actually been part of for some time is the Joint Investigative Team concept or what is referred to as the JIT. So this JIT program basically from the beginning of an investigation, prosecutors, magistrates, investigators all sit down. They identify the target as a whole, they enter into a legal agreement to continuously share evidence that can be used in both court rooms, say the United States court and the Belgian court. The first one that the United States/ DEA signed with our European partners and that took place in November 2015 and that brought in the countries of the United States, France, Germany, Italy and Belgium. We all became part of the Joint Investigative Team. And this investigation yielded great results. There were arrests throughout Europe. We got share information on a very timely basis that brought down a major major network operating not only in all these European countries but what we learned having tentacles to the United States.

Notwithstanding the JIT process, we work regularly on a bilateral basis with our European counterparts. So we daily weekly monthly have successes that stem from this great relationship that we built throughout the last 40 years. One example connects that the US and EU together just recently was a huge drug seizure which occurred in the port of Antwerp, one of the busiest ports obviously in Europe based upon some good lead up intelligence in March with our Belgian counterparts we seized over 3000 kilograms of cocaine disguised as a banana shipment inside one of those containers. So it kinda gives you an idea of the information that is developed from one country with the DEA in many times and then us working with other partners such as the Belgians.

The problem has no identity as far as a US or European problem – it's a world problem. And the only way we're gonna combat the problem is through a variety of ways you know, enforcement and deterrence is just one but we have to collectively, not only our partners in the US or State local partners but our international partners, we have to come together if we're going to have a viable opposition.