

AMLA FIRST CONFERENCE – BUILDING TRUST, ENHANCING INTEGRITY: A NEW CHAPTER IN THE EU’S FIGHT AGAINST FINANCIAL CRIME

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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Good afternoon, colleagues, partners, and friends.

As we come to the close of this inaugural AMLA Conference, my feeling (and I suspect the feeling across this room) is one of deep energy and shared purpose.

Before we look ahead, let us take a moment to celebrate this milestone. I want to extend a massive thank you to our panellists, the organizing team, and every single one of you who stayed, engaged, and contributed your insights today. This event is not just a calendar item; it shows the new era for financial integrity in Europe that we are building together.

Throughout the day, we have been talking about the mechanics of financial crime, about ongoing threats and threats to come. Threats are adaptive, fast, and completely unstoppable by traditional borders.

And we have heard what is really at stake here. Safeguarding the integrity of our financial system requires strong compliance, effective tools, and managing risk parameters. But this is not a stand-alone effort. This is also about actively defending our economies, ensuring long-term effective delivery from supervisors, FIUs and other public institutions, and securing the European Union’s capacity to act with confidence, independence, and resilience on an increasingly uncertain global stage. This is our shared shield, and we have already started to build it together.

Our first panel focused on the vital role of financial intelligence, and they did not shy away from realities. We confronted a stark, collective challenge: the fact that a very limited number of Suspicious Activity Reports actively feed into organized crime investigations.

This is not a lack of will; it is about the need to have a more efficient architecture. In a fragmented system, criminal networks exploit the spaces between us, moving money wherever they spot the weakest control or the most isolated area.

It is clear that we need to turn gaps into bridges. Forward-looking solutions explored today focus on the prevalence of quality over quantity, when it comes to information exchanges. By (i) sharing priorities, (ii) reading the risks the same way, and (iii) building a close cooperation culture with supervisors across the EU, we can empower our FIUs to deliver a high-value, actionable intelligence and deprioritize the administrative noise.

We also heard the clear call from our private sector partners, who are eager to deploy their considerable resources more effectively. We know the hurdles of complex and not always fully harmonized data protection rules that we will have to walk with. Moving forward, we have heard the need for collaborative work to design safe, dynamic pathways for authorities and the private sector to share insights securely and legally.

This is precisely where AMLA's new architecture may change the game. And I would like to echo what the Chair alluded to in her opening remarks: By bringing supervision and financial intelligence under the exact same roof for the first time in European history, we are creating a beautiful, unprecedented feedback loop:

- The ground-level findings from our direct supervision will immediately inform and alert FIU activities.
- The macro analytical insights generated by our FIUs will, in turn, sharpen and guide our supervisory focus.

For law enforcement, this means AMLA will act as a force multiplier. We aren't here to replace any national authority; we are here to support and provide inputs to them through joint, unified intelligence.

In Panel 2, building a modern level playing field was the bottom line. The conversation shifted to how AMLA will operate in practice, and the consensus was inspiringly clear: **AMLA is fundamentally not "business as usual"**. We are co-creating a new institutional architecture that balances high expectations with a deeply proportionate, practical vision of where we can reach, along with our obliged entities across the entire EU.

Our panellists made a clear point: **regulatory convergence is not an administrative burden or a distant aspiration**; it is an operational need for conducting a modern economy.

- **For our supervisors**, it gives us common methodologies and shared risk frameworks so we can speak the exact same language.
- **For our cross-border firms**, it removes the frustrating and high-cost adaptations to divergent national interpretations, replaced instead by predictable legal certainty and a genuine level playing field.

The journey to convergence is already underway. The most exciting point about is that we are not waiting around for a distant implementation date like 2028. The relationships are being built while producing the Level 2&3 instruments among ourselves, they are being built right now, in this room... The digital bridges, the mutual trust, and the collaborative frameworks are being forged today.

Simplification will be embedded into our work towards real convergence. Success will not be measured by the volume of the rules we can write, but by the convergence of our outcomes: consistent, reliable risk assessments, seamless cross-border cooperation, and ultimately a European economy better protected against financial crime.

Today reminded us just how essential our work is, and how exciting the road ahead will be.

Our third panel brought us face-to-face with the digital frontier. There is no denying that the rapid digitalization of finance has created a lightning-fast risk environment. Sophisticated criminal networks are agile, moving rapidly to exploit new technologies and artificial intelligence for their purposes.

But the overarching message from today is quite empowering: **AI is not a distant prospect; it is already reshaping the battlefield in real time.** It is true that criminal networks are exploiting it to move faster, hide deeper, and adapt more quickly than ever before.

But the same tools we have the chance to make sure that empower them will empower us even more. This is not just an upgrade in technology, it is a transformation in how we protect our financial system, how we cooperate across borders, and how we safeguard the integrity of our economies. The challenge is great, but the opportunity is even greater.

Let's consider one unique advantage also underlined today: **AMLA is the very first European supervisory authority to be built from the ground up in the era of Artificial Intelligence.** We do not have to complain about legacy systems or fight decades of digital inertia. We have the historic opportunity to embed advanced data analytics, automated cross-border information sharing, and technological agility into AMLA's DNA from day one.

To maximize this advantage, public and private sectors must work hand-in-hand. We need to co-develop common standards, break down data silos, and foster genuine

technological partnerships. No single actor can win this digital race alone, but it will be easier through a unified tech-forward coalition, such as the one we are building together.

As we step out of this conference and look to the immediate horizon, AMLA is moving forward simultaneously across three strategic lines of action:

1. **Completing our unified legal framework** to once and for all eliminate the fragmentation that permits regulatory arbitrage.
2. **Preparing for direct, robust supervision** of a core group of financial institutions, setting a new global benchmark for excellence.
3. **Enhancing our mechanisms for financial intelligence** to deliver actionable, timely data straight into the hands of investigators and prosecutors.

We are building a comprehensive analytical risk framework at both the macro level (mapping EU-wide threats) and the micro level (getting down into sector-specific vulnerabilities and producing an entity-level risk assessment). This capability will allow us to transition collectively to a more proactive role. Together, we will shape tomorrow's priorities rather than just cleaning up yesterday's crises.

Let me speak clearly: no single European authority can achieve these challenges alone. The ultimate power of this framework relies entirely on the collective commitment of everyone listening today: our supervisors, our FIUs, our law enforcement Authorities, and our private sector leaders.

This is truly a collective endeavour. It requires a cultural shift where we treat cross-border cooperation not as a mere procedural requirement, but as our most valuable strategic asset. It relies on a foundation of mutual trust.

So, here is my direct invitation and challenge to everyone in this room as we conclude our first forum: **Engage with AMLA in that exact collaborative spirit.**

- Contribute your invaluable, real-world experience.
- Challenge us wherever necessary so we can refine our processes.
- Help us ensure that the system we are co-shaping remains deeply credible, operationally resilient, and highly effective.

The road ahead will be demanding, and our new European AML/CFT system will take time to fully mature. But our direction is certain, and our momentum is real. We are moving toward deep coherence, sophisticated intelligence, and a risk-based framework that genuinely works.

Together (a unified front of authorities, entities, and innovators) we will establish AMLA as a solid pillar of stability, integrity, and trust for the European economy.

Thank you for your time, dedication, and your fruitful collaboration today. Let's move forward and build this together.