

PREFACE

In October 2002 T.M.C. Asser Press – the publishing house of the T.M.C. Asser Institute for Public and Private International Law, International Commercial Arbitration and European Law – was approached by Judge Robert Blekxtoon, the President of the Extradition Chamber, District Court of Amsterdam as he then was, to discuss the possibility of publishing a Handbook on the Framework Decision on the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) and surrender procedures in the Member States which had been formally adopted earlier that year. From the outset Judge Blekxtoon's plan for a publication on this important and topical theme was met with great enthusiasm by the Press and the Institute, which led the Asser Institute to make available the necessary time for manpower and research to support the development of the Handbook. One of its researchers, Wouter van Ballegooij, in close cooperation with an editorial board consisting of renowned academics and practitioners, played a crucial role in its development.

It was clear from the very beginning that the *Handbook on the European Arrest Warrant* could create opportunities for a much wider practice-oriented documentation, research and publication project on the implementation of the EAW and the application of the surrender procedures in the Member States. In June (2004) the Asser Institute, as the principal partner of an international consortium, obtained a grant under the European Union's AGIS programme to develop a pan-European EAW Project. The consortium consists of Justice (London, UK), the Max Planck Institute for International Criminal Law (Germany), the University of Lund (Sweden), The Amsterdam Centre for International Law at the University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands), The National Library of Estonia, The European Criminal Bar Association (ECBA) and the Ministry of Justice of Romania with the support of The Hague-based organizations Eurojust and the International Association of Prosecutors (IAP). Being awarded this grant was the result of discussions and conceptual development initiated and coordinated by Philip van Tongeren and Julien Simon.

In September (2004) the consortium formally launched the European Arrest Warrant Project. The aim of the project is to promote the uniform and transparent implementation of the EAW and to improve knowledge of the surrender system by forming an international network of experts, legal practitioners, researchers, and regional and national correspondents. This network will produce peer-reviewed commentaries and documentation on the EAW, including its implementation in the Member States, national case law and articles based on (comparative) research. An English-language Internet site <www.eurowarrant.net> will be open to the public with general information about the Framework Decision and the European Arrest Warrant Project. Additionally, an English-

language, database-based extranet will be developed, which is an integral part of the website, where up to date and practical information can be accessed.

We invite parties interested in collaborating in this project to get in touch with us by sending an e-mail to information@eurowarrant.net.

I am confident that *The Handbook on the European Arrest Warrant* and the European Arrest Warrant Project of our consortium will make an important contribution to the better understanding and functioning of the European Arrest Warrant among the current as well as the future Member States.

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