

# **SICO**

## **The Danish Special International Crimes Office**

### **Executive Summary of the 2005 Annual Report**

**On 2 January 2006, the Special International Crimes Office of Denmark (SICO) issued its 2005 Annual Report. SICO was established by the Danish Government on 1 June 2002 to investigate and – if possible – prosecute serious crimes committed abroad to ensure Denmark does not provide a safe haven for perpetrators of such crimes. SICO is the national body responsible for investigating and prosecuting international crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, terrorist acts and other serious crimes committed abroad. SICO is part of the Danish Prosecution Service and is headed by a Director of Prosecution. Under the leadership of a Police Commander, the investigative staff are organisationally placed under the Danish National Police.**

During 2005, the Special International Crimes Office (SICO) received 31 new cases related to serious crimes committed abroad, bringing the total number of cases received since the founding of SICO in 2002 to 113. Some cases include several different crimes. Twenty-six new cases were in the most serious crime categories of homicide or complicity in homicide. Five cases concerned violence, torture or other kinds of serious violent crime. The new cases represented crimes committed in 16 different countries across four continents. The majority related to Asia, in particular Afghanistan, the Middle East and Africa while the remainder were equally distributed among the former Yugoslavian countries and the Americas. Most cases were reported by victims or witnesses or initiated through SICO's own investigation. A decreasing number of new cases were received from the Danish Immigration Service. In general, the reported cases related to civil war or similar circumstances. To a certain extent, however, the crimes were a result of private disputes between persons or families.

At the end of the year, 24 cases were open and under investigation, among them one case that was reopened when the suspect re-entered Denmark. Most of the open cases were in the homicide or complicity in homicide category. During the year, 35 cases were closed. In total 90 cases have been closed since 2002. Average duration of investigation was 6.5 months per case. In 2005, 77 percent of all closed cases were completed within 12 months.

In 2005, SICO decided to implement some structural adjustments. The original organisational model based on four geographically oriented investigative groups was changed from 1 November due to the change in working conditions since the founding of SICO in 2002. In addition, management wished to give priority to pro-active investigation and documentation. The new organisational structure reflects SICO's core responsibilities: to identify and locate persons suspected of having committed serious crimes abroad. Additionally, SICO needs to accumulate substantial knowledge about relevant international issues. Furthermore, SICO is tasked with

investigating and prosecuting suspects of such crimes. The new organisational model is built on three multi-functional units, each with its distinct area of responsibility.

By the end of 2005, SICO had a staff of 18, of whom six were lawyers, 10 detectives and two administrative assistants. However, due to vacancies and external obligations, such as UN assignments abroad, the actual number of working days available was considerably lower. The average number of working days in 2005 was equivalent to a staff of 14.66. In addition, SICO staff have been engaged in educational activities and specialist training related to its tasks, e.g., language training.

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