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TRANS 187
RELEX 441
ECO 73
PESC 620
COTER 44
ENFOPOL 132
COSDP 439
PROCIV 70
ENER 176
ATO 48
DATAPROTECT 37
TELECOM 101**

NOTE

from : EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator
to : COREPER/Council/European Council

Subject : Report on the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan to Combat
Terrorism

This report is a response to the European Council's request for a report every six months on the implementation of the Action Plan to combat terrorism adopted in June 2004.¹ The report summarises progress since December 2008 and the state of play regarding ratification of the Conventions and implementation of the legislative acts regarded as having priority, the details of which are set out in ADD 1.²

¹ The latest version of the Action Plan to Combat Terrorism is contained in 7233/1/07 REV 1.

² Previous report in 15912/08

In December 2005 the European Council adopted the European Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which continues to provide the framework for EU activity in this field.¹ The strategic commitment of the Union is to combat terrorism globally while respecting human rights, and to make Europe safer, allowing its citizens to live in an area of freedom, security and justice. The Strategy groups all actions under four headings - PREVENT, PROTECT, PURSUE and RESPOND. The Revised Action Plan follows this pattern, with the objective of setting out clearly what the EU is trying to achieve and the means by which it intends to do so. The report covers progress on individual actions within this same framework.

Prevent

Revision of the Strategy and the Action Plan

The first objective of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy is to prevent people from turning to terrorism by tackling the factors which can lead to radicalisation and recruitment, in Europe and elsewhere. To attain this objective, in December 2005, the Council adopted a Strategy and an Action Plan to counter radicalisation and recruitment which is reviewed annually.²

The Radicalisation and Recruitment Action Plan - Implementation Plan has been drafted during the Czech Presidency with a view to its approval before June.³

The European Network of Experts on Radicalisation (ENER) managed by The Change Institute (London) and supported by the European Commission organised a seminar entitled 'The radicalisation phenomenon in Europe: present challenges and future trajectories' in February 2009. The ENER consists of a network of leading experts on radicalisation from different academic disciplines who are renowned specialists in their field. Focusing on violent radicalisation and extremism that leads to acts of terrorism, the work of ENER aims to deepen understanding of the violent radicalisation phenomenon in order to enhance counter-terrorism and preventive approaches being pursued at EU and Member State levels.

¹ 14469/4/05

² last update 15443/07

³ 9915/09 ADD 1 RESTREINT UE

The above mentioned seminar highlighted and discussed key findings from the four studies that were recently produced for the European Commission¹ as well as providing a forum for critical thinking about future challenges and trends.

In February, the Czech Presidency hosted a 'Kick off meeting' in Prague on 'Links between activities of right wing extremism and terrorism'. The aim of the meeting was to enhance the discussion on right wing extremism (RWE), its common traits with terrorism, relationship to radicalisation and on preventive measures. The meeting itself also involved a discussion on possible links between extreme right-wing activities and terrorism, its extent as well as on preventive and curative measures through case studies and practical experience. The Action plan on R&R has been revised based on the results. Draft Council Conclusions on the issue will be adopted by June 2009².

Lead Member States

Work has been taken forward on six topics led by individual Member States (UK, Germany, Sweden, Netherlands and Denmark). The work method has proven its merits in creating a shared focus on key challenges. Belgium is now co-sponsoring together with Sweden the work on the role of police officers in recognising and countering radicalisation, just as the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and the UK are partners to the German led project.

On media, the UK organised an informal work session on CT strategic communications on 18-19 February. The findings of the meeting gave further ideas and impetus to concrete and practical measures to better target the 'counter narrative'. They also underline the importance of pro-active communication of our general policies to the outside world. The importance of appointing an EU Arab speaking press officer was again underlined.

¹ 1. Best practices in cooperation between civil society and authorities with a view to the prevention and response to violent radicalisation;
2. The factors that may trigger or affect violent radicalisation processes, particularly among youth;
3. The beliefs, ideologies and narrative of violent radicals; and
4. Recruitment and mobilisation for the Islamist militant movement in Europe.

² 9890/09

As for imam-training, Spain has taken forward the work by compiling a map of the situation in each Member State based on their own input and responses to a questionnaire. In the first instance, work will focus on portraying a clear picture of relations between religion and state, the reality of Islam in each Member State as well as the existence of training centres for imams. In the second and third stages, focus will be on identifying common challenges, possible solutions to these and best practices.

As a sub-project of the Check the Web initiative, Germany has taken the lead to address the prevention of terrorist content on the internet with the project "Exploring the Islamist Extremist Web of Europe - Analysis and Preventive Approaches". The project is carried out in partnership with the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom. The project will focus on assessing jointly the threat arising from open source violent extremist websites, especially those targeted at European audiences, as well as on possible ways to significantly reduce the dissemination of such content.

Belgium has joined Sweden in leading work on the capacities of local police to recognise and prevent radicalisation. This project will focus on the key role of community policing. Its objective is twofold: first, to create a practical tool to support first line officers in detecting early-on the signs of radicalisation and, second, to provide a concrete and operational working method to these police officers involving other local partners. The outcome of the project could also be used as a basis for training within national police academies as well as in Cepol.

On the role of local authorities in preventing radicalisation, the Netherlands is leading an initiative to look closer at how practical best practices at a local level can be shared among EU Member States. The project is taking inspiration from the findings of a recently finished project on recognising radicalisation and the aim will be to develop concrete methods of assisting front line professionals and community activists in their work of understanding and preventing radicalisation.

Finally, on prevention of radicalisation, particularly among young people, Denmark has undertaken a project on de-radicalisation and disengagement based on the inspiration of their national Action Plan to prevent and counter extremist views and radicalization among young people. The project is being carried out by the Ministry of Integration in partnership with the security service and municipalities. Its aim is to develop practical tools such as coaching techniques and mentorship as well as enhancing the contact and interaction between law enforcement and municipal authorities.

Key for all six projects is that they aim to identify innovative approaches that can be of a model character for other Member States. They will all aim at identifying practical best practices as well as producing concrete tools of possible relevance to other Member States.

Video footage has been produced under the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator's guidance to illustrate some concrete initiatives at Member States and EU level for combating radicalisation and recruitment in Europe.

Check the Web

Regarding the developments of the Check the Web initiative managed by Europol, Member States' support to the project had been hindered by data protection rules which limited the input of personal data in the portal. The problem has been identified and Europol after consultation with the Joint Supervisory Body intends to amend the legal framework of the Check the Web portal to embed it in an AWF environment.¹

The number of accounts offered to the Member States will be significantly augmented from July 2009 with the implementation at Europol of the Identity Access Management project. However some Members States are still facing difficulties to use the portal, due to the fact that their Counter Terrorism Unit(s) are not directly connected to it but are dependent on the connections available at their Europol National Unit to access the Check the Web portal.

¹ 9604/09

Phase two of the Check the Web Portal is being implemented and should be fully operational by the end of the year with the integration of audio and video files as well as analysis of documents and statements provided by the Member States.

Alliance of civilisations

The EU contributes to the important work of the Alliance of Civilisations in the field of prevention of extremism and radicalisation.

The recent meeting in Istanbul, April 6-8, was an occasion to take stock of our respective efforts in line with the EU-Alliance of Civilisations Action Plan of September 2008. Not least in the field of media has it been useful to exchange and share best practices.

The Rapid Response Media Mechanism has been a useful tool in providing a platform for voices that can help reduce tensions at times of cross-cultural crisis by framing contentious issues in less polarising terms.

Protect

The second objective of the Counter-Terrorism Strategy is to protect citizens and infrastructure and reduce our vulnerability to attack, *inter alia* through improved security of borders, transport and critical infrastructure.

Due to technical problems in implementation of the second generation of the Schengen Information System (SIS II), September 2009 appeared to be an unrealistic deadline. According to the new schedule, it was agreed to postpone implementation to no later than June 2010.

Member States have agreed on recommendations to further improve the quality of the information included in the SIS concerning lost and stolen documents and to address the danger posed by the misuse of ID documents by criminals and terrorists¹.

¹ 7499/2/09

The legislation related to the Visa Information System (VIS) involves in particular the introduction of biometrics (digital facial image and digital fingerprints) in the visa application procedure for persons 12 years of age and older, the introduction of visa files into a common database and the use of this data for the purpose of border control at the external borders. Provision has also been made for access to the VIS by designated authorities of the Member States and to Europol for the purposes of the prevention, detection and investigation of terrorist offences and of other serious criminal offences. On 6 April 2009, the Council took note of a report from the Presidency, based on the activities of the Group of Friends of the VIS, on the progress made on the deployment of the VIS. The intention is to start up operations of the VIS on 21 December 2009 with regard to North Africa, which is the first region in the regional roll-out of the system.

The legislation on passports and travel documents issued by Member States implies that by June 2009 such documents must be issued as individual documents and must contain a chip with biometric identifiers in the case of persons 12 years of age and older.

Following an evaluation process, it was concluded that the Swiss Confederation was applying the Schengen acquis correctly and that it therefore fulfilled the necessary conditions for the country's admission to the Schengen area. The controls at the land borders between Switzerland and its EU neighbours were lifted on 12 December 2008 and at air border on 29 March 2009.

When adopting the European Pact on immigration and asylum last October¹, the European Council requested the establishment in 2009 of a 'European asylum support office with the task of facilitating the exchange of information, analysis and experience between Member States and developing practical cooperation between the administrations in charge of examining asylum applications'. In February, the Council held a first exchange of views on a new proposal for establishing a European asylum support office, in the context of the development of a common European asylum system²

¹ 13440/08

² 6700/09

EPCIP

In April 2009, the Commission submitted to the Council a Communication on Critical Information Infrastructure Protection "Protecting Europe from large scale cyber-attacks and disruptions: enhancing preparedness, security and resilience". The objective of the Communication is to enhance the CIIP preparedness and response capability in EU and to promote the adoption of adequate and consistent levels of preventive, detection, emergency and recovery measures as well as to foster international cooperation, in particular on Internet stability and resilience.

Council Directive 2008/114/EC of 8 December 2008 on the identification and designation of European critical infrastructures and the assessment of the need to improve their protection was published in Official Journal L 345 on 23 December 2008.

The Commission Communication on a European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection (EPCIP) of December 2006 established external cooperation as one of the pillars of EPCIP¹. The Council Working Party on Civil Protection (PROCIV) has undertaken to examine the implementation of that external dimension.

In October 2008, the Commission presented the Proposal for a Council Decision on a Critical Infrastructure Warning Information Network (CIWIN)² which is being examined by the Council Working Party on Civil Protection.

¹ 16932/06

² 15041/08 + ADD 1 -13, 5052/09 and 5102/09

Transport Security

In February ¹, the Council adopted six legislative acts² that are part of the third maritime package, in accordance with joint texts on which agreement was reached with the European Parliament under the Parliament-Council conciliation procedure. The six legislative acts adopted belong to a series of measures, consisting of a total of seven legislative proposals, aiming, inter alia, to strengthen the security of maritime transport in Europe.

Security of explosives

To implement actions 1.2.7 and 4.3.1 of the EU Action Plan on Enhancing the Security of Explosives³, adopted by the Council in April 2008, the Czech Presidency drew up a booklet containing key information about the procedures and experiences of Member States on jamming and shutting down of the signals of electronic communications networks⁴.

Progress has also been made in the work on enhancing the security of precursors to explosives. The Standing Committee on Precursors, consisting of experts from Member State authorities and the private sector, convened for its sixth meeting in February 2009 to discuss its Annual Report for 2008. The Annual Report contains a number of concrete recommendations on the precursors of highest concern. These recommendations include banning the sales of certain substances above a given concentration limit to the general public, placing professional use of these precursors under better control (e.g. recording the identity of the buyer), or establishing a system for recording suspicious transactions.

¹ Adopted by the (2927th JAI) Council on 27/02/2009 and signed on 23 April 2009

² Docs PE CONS :
3719/08 Directive Classification societies
3720/08 Regulation Classification societies
3721/08 Directive Port State Control
3722/08 Directive Vessel traffic monitoring
3723/08 Directive Accidents investigation
3724/08 Regulation Shipowners civil liability

³ 8311/08

⁴ 8185/09 RESTREINT UE

Since the adoption of the EU Action Plan on Enhancing the Security of Explosives, Europol has been working actively to implement the Plan. The creation of the European Explosive Ordnance Disposal Network (EEODN) is one of the achievements. The Early Warning System (EWS) is currently being developed by Spain in partnership with Europol. Its presentation, implementation and deployment to all the interested MS is expected to start by the end of 2009.

The European Bomb Data System (EBDS) is expected to be operational by the first half of 2010 and, once in place, will allow the improvement of the exchange of information and intelligence between experts in the fields of explosives and CBRN.¹ A tender procedure has already been launched by Europol.

The European Explosive Ordnance Disposal Network (EEODN) remains the one and only network of explosives experts within the EU. Should funding be granted, the EEODN is expected to develop initiatives, including training, in which US agencies could be incited to participate.

Security related research

On 15 January 2009, the informal Meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers discussed the use of modern technologies for security purposes. The Ministers widely agreed that this rapidly developing area requires a systemic approach. The Ministers noted, in particular, that law enforcement authorities cannot fall behind criminals in their capability to use modern technologies efficiently.

At the JHA Council meeting in June, the Chair of the European Security Research and Innovation Forum (ESRIF) will present the ESRIF's final report. ESRIF was set up in 2007 and its task was to present mid- and long-term priorities for security research. In particular, the ESRIF agenda was supposed to establish perspectives until 2030 as well as to develop the 'innovation' dimension taking into account Member States' research activities.

¹ Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear.

The European Network of Law Enforcement Technology Services (ENLETS), set up under the French Presidency, has started its work and is in the process of agreeing on procedural rules that aim to make ENLETS an end-user-friendly tool, operating on an informal basis, to fulfil its main objective of improving cooperation between national police forces in the area of security technology, simplifying exchanges of new information and practical experience and thereby finding optimum solutions. Meetings of the relevant contact points should allow for the identification of "blank spaces" (hitherto non-existent technology) and discussions to create a competitive environment where the most appropriate solution for the end user will be considered in relation to specific requirements.

Pursue

The third objective of the European strategy against terrorism is to pursue and investigate terrorists across our borders as well as globally: to impede planning, travel and communications; to disrupt support networks; to cut off funding and access to attack materials, and to bring terrorists to justice.

Data sharing

The Council endorsed guidelines for the implementation of the "Swedish Framework Decision" (Council Framework Decision 2006/960/JHA of 18 December 2006 on simplifying the exchange of information and intelligence between law enforcement authorities of the Member States of the European Union)¹ that entered into force on 19 December 2008. Discussions are continuing to promote the increasing use of this new legal framework, notably by making the standard form more user-friendly.

¹ 8083/09

The evaluation procedure to authorise Member States to start DNA, fingerprint and vehicle registration data exchange pursuant to Council Decision 2008/615/JHA and 2008/616/JHA (Prüm Decisions), is currently being finalised and is expected to be applied in the coming months for several Member States.

The Presidency and the Commission continued work in the context of the EU-US High Level Contact Group on data protection and data sharing. It was agreed that a roadmap for a future EU-US Agreement on data protection should be prepared so as to have clear options for the future Agreement. The EU side has continued to emphasise to the US side the importance of finding a satisfactory solution to the judicial redress principle.

Regarding the proposal for a Framework Decision on PNR, the Czech Presidency incorporated the conclusions of the report drawn up during the French Presidency into the text of the draft Framework decision. A fourth reading of the Framework decision was finalised.

Europol and Eurojust

The negotiating teams of Europol and Eurojust have eventually reached an agreement on the amendments to their cooperation agreement, which the Council requested by end 2008. The CTC welcomes the imminent approval of the revised cooperation agreement by the Council and suggests that a regular reporting on the implementation of this revised agreement to the Council takes place.

Europol

At its meeting on 6 April 2009, the Council adopted a Decision establishing the European Police Office (Europol). This Decision will contribute to improving Europol's operational and administrative functioning and extends its mandate to cover organised crime, terrorism and other forms of serious crime without the need to demonstrate the involvement of an organised criminal structure.

The Council also decided to appoint a new Director for Europol for a four-year period starting on 16 April 2009.

Criminal law: Approximation of Member States' criminal law and mutual recognition

The Framework Decision amending the Framework Decision on combating terrorism of 2002 (2002/475/JHA) was adopted by the Council in November 2008¹. The amended Framework decision covers notably the addition of public provocation to commit a terrorist offence, recruitment and training for terrorism.

In November 2008, the Council adopted a Framework Decision on the protection of personal data processed in the framework of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters². The purpose of this act is to ensure a high level of protection for the basic rights and freedoms, in particular the privacy of individuals, while guaranteeing a high level of public safety when exchanging personal data.

In February 2009, the Council adopted a Framework Decision on the exchange of information extracted from criminal records between EU Member States.³ This Framework Decision is aimed at improving the exchange of information on criminal convictions handed down against nationals of the Member States. It lays the ground rules for the transmission of information on convictions to the country of the person's nationality as well as for the storage of such information by that country and for the retransmission, upon request, to other Member States. The Council followed this with the adoption in April 2009 of the Council Decision on the establishment of the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS) in application of art. 11 of Framework Decision 2009/315/JHA⁴ which establishes an computerised system of interconnection of the national criminal records databases.

¹ JO L 330 of 9.12.2008, p. 21

² JO L 350 of 30.12.2008, p 60

³ JO L 93 of 7.4.2009 pp, 23 and 33

⁴ JO L 93 of 7.4.2009 pp, 23 and 33

In February, the Council also adopted a Framework Decision on enhancing the procedural rights of persons and fostering the application of the principle of mutual recognition in respect of decisions rendered in the absence of the person at the trial (trials in absentia)¹. Differences in approach across the EU have been creating a degree of uncertainty and delay in cases where the defendants were convicted in their absence. The procedural guarantees established in this Framework Decision, in particular the right to a retrial or appeal if the defendant was not properly informed about the original trial and had not appointed a lawyer to represent him or her, will allow Member States to enforce each others' judgments with even greater confidence that the persons' rights of defence are fully respected.

The existing instruments on mutual recognition (Framework Decisions on the European arrest warrant, financial penalties, confiscation orders, transfer of sentenced persons, and the supervision of probation measures and alternative sanctions) will have to be modified to take into account the provisions of this Framework Decision.

Operational cooperation

The results of the Joint Customs Operation ATHENA focusing on money laundering linked to terrorism financing and other illicit activities, which took place in September 2008, were evaluated. The unprecedented operational synergy between international agencies and organisations as well as the confirmation and identification of risk indicators were the main achievements but further improvements in the exchange of and access to information were also identified.

With a view to improving radio communications between operational units in border areas and fulfilling the needs of police forces, a draft Council Recommendation² was submitted to the Council proposing several technical measures, including the development of intersystem interfaces, the allocation of appropriate frequencies and the development of a European standard regarding high-speed data communication and roaming functionality which satisfies law enforcement needs.

¹ JO L 81 of 27.03.2009, p 24

² 6210/1/09

The Council approved, at the end of last year, a Cooperation Agreement between the European Police College (CEPOL) and Interpol¹. The purpose of the Agreement is to enhance the training of senior police officers, in particular through cooperation in the organisation of courses, seminars and conferences and in the development and implementation of common curricula and course materials.

Terrorist financing

The CTC issued his first report on the implementation of the Terrorist Financing Strategy². Subsequent reporting on this Strategy will be integrated in regular implementation reports.

In February, the Council adopted a Decision authorising the signature, on behalf of the European Community, of the Council of Europe Convention on laundering, search, seizure and confiscation of the proceeds from crime and on the financing of terrorism

Response

The fourth priority of the EU's Counter-Terrorism strategy is to prepare ourselves, in a spirit of solidarity, to manage and minimize the consequences of a terrorist attack, by improving our ability to deal with the aftermath, the coordination of the response, and the needs of victims. At the end of last year, the Council adopted Conclusions calling for civil protection capabilities to be enhanced by a European mutual assistance system building on the civil protection modular approach.³

¹ 13756/08
² 8864/1/09
³ 16474/08

Victims of terrorism

The Council recognises the importance of honouring victims of terrorism and emphasises that the solidarity, assistance and compensation of the victims of terrorism and their families constitutes an integral part of the response to terrorism. This is underlined by several actions undertaken by the Council, the Presidency and the EU High Representative for CFSP Javier Solana. The High Representative in February visited the "Victims of Terrorism" exhibition at the European Parliament. A video made for the 1st European Day for the victims of terrorism can be found on the web page of the Council.

In December the Commission awarded EUR 200.000 to the Network on Associations of Victims of Terrorism, which is currently mapping the associations in the EU providing assistance to the victims of terrorism and opened its website, www.europeanvictims.net, at the beginning of 2009. The website contains the aforementioned mapping, a description of the volunteering programme and other related information. The Network organised commemorative events on the European Day for the Victims of Terrorism on 11 March and is going to hold a seminar on legislation on terrorism on 21-22 May in Turin, Italy.

In February 2008 the Commission set up a CBRN Task Force in order to bring together relevant expertise in this field. The aim of the Task Force was to help the Commission to develop a policy on CBRN. All scheduled expert meetings addressing prevention, detection and response to biological, radio-nuclear and chemical threats have duly taken place. The Czech Presidency hosted, in January 2009, a CBRN Conference in Prague in order to formally conclude the work of the CBRN Task Force.

The conference, attended by experts from the Member States, the Commission, the European Counter-terrorism Coordinator and the private sector, brought together the work of all subgroups and strands of the Task Force and addressed essential horizontal issues. The final report of the Task Force, which was presented at the conference, will constitute the basis for the Commission's "CBRN policy package", to be adopted on 10 June 2009.

During the second round of the peer evaluation of national counter-terrorism arrangements focusing on preparedness and consequence management, 19 Member States have been evaluated so far (by May 2009). The main authorities participating in the exercise are the police forces, security and intelligence services, and civil protection bodies such as fire departments or the civil defence. The armed forces, providing reinforcement to civilian authorities in case of need, and NGOs, such as the Red Cross, have also been involved in the expert visit in some of the evaluated Member States. Member States have demonstrated their keen interest in the initiative through an active approach towards the preparation and implementation of the visits. The participation of the Commission and Europol has provided added value to the evaluation missions.

International cooperation

The EU and its Member States have continued to be active in promoting measures to prevent terrorism through international organisations and in their policy dialogue with third countries. In addition to his regular travel to conferences and speaking engagements, the CTC has made bilateral visits to Turkey, Pakistan and Yemen. Detailed reports on these visits have been circulated by COREU. The CTC plans in the near future to visit Afghanistan, India and North Africa.

International organisations

In line with its overall objective of supporting the broadest possible multi-lateral co-operation, the EU attaches particular emphasis to the role of the United Nations. There has been a particularly close dialogue with the UN Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED). Mike Smith, Executive Director of the CTED briefed the COTER working group on 29 January 2009 and his staff have visited Brussels for more detailed discussions. We have agreed on the possibility of including EU representatives in Missions organised by CTED, although this has not yet actually happened. There has also been regular contact with the Head of the Terrorism Branch of the UNODC, who briefed COTER on 1 April, and the Czech Presidency has also invited the incoming Director of the CTITF to brief COTER.

The EU continues to engage with other international and regional organisations to look for synergies and ensure complementarity of approach. There have been informal contacts in this respect with NATO and the African Union. Counter-Terrorism also features on the regular agenda of the EU's contacts with ASEM and ASEAN.

Technical assistance

The EU and its Member States continue to offer technical assistance to a great number of countries which enhances their capacity to counter terrorism. The 2009-2011 Indicative Programme for the Instrument for Stability includes the first global counter-terrorism measures developed by the Commission together with experts from EU Member States. Key priorities are Pakistan and Afghanistan as well as the Sahel region in Africa. The programme also includes a significant component to tackle the threat of piracy on critical maritime routes, in particular in the Gulf of Aden, by enhancing the capacity of coastal states to patrol their own territorial waters and exchange information. Links between terrorism and organized crime are addressed in areas such as drugs trafficking from Latin America to Western Africa, trafficking in small arms and light weapons, and illicit trafficking in chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) materials.

Pakistan in particular signalled a willingness to step up CT cooperation with the EU during the the CTC's visit in January 2009, when he was received at the highest level including by then Interior Adviser Rehman Malik, now Minister. A scoping mission composed by EU Member States and Commission which took place from 25 March to 4 April explored possibilities for financial assistance in the areas of law enforcement; criminal justice and de-radicalisation. The report of this Mission is currently being prepared.

The potential for CT cooperation in the Sahel was already looked at by a mission which visited in June of last year. A detailed paper on options for a wider EU engagement with the countries of the Sahel has been finalised in the COAFR group after discussion with the other relevant interested groups, and is likely to be followed up by a further mission to the region.

In its dialogue with partners, bilaterally and multilaterally, the EU has continued to emphasize that the fight against terrorism must be conducted in full compliance with the rule of law and human rights. A seminar with Israel, specifically to address the dilemmas this poses for democracies, took place in December 2008.

The first Counter-Terrorism Troika meeting with Egypt took place in Brussels on 31 March, and a first Troika visit to Yemen took place on 6/7 May. Regular Troika meetings have also been held with Canada, Russia and the USA. A meeting with India has been agreed for 11 June in New Delhi. The annual workshop with the GCC on Terrorist Financing took place in Riyadh on 4/5 May.

On 9/10 December Europol hosted a two day seminar which focused on the worldwide activities of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). This assembled representatives from 15 EU Member States as well as from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, The USA, Switzerland and Interpol. On 30 and 31 March, Eurojust hosted a tactical meeting on the worldwide criminal activities of the LTTE.

Western Balkans

During the Slovenian Presidency, first half of 2008, a project was launched concerning the sharing of best practice and recommendations on fight against terrorism in the EU Member States with Western Balkan countries. During the French Presidency the preparatory work continued and during the Czech Presidency preparatory visits to Serbia, BiH, FYROM and Croatia have been organised. The interim reports have been presented to the Working Party on Terrorism. After the preparatory visits and full endorsement of the initiative, a questionnaire would be forwarded to the participating Western Balkan countries to assess their counter-terrorism structures. On the basis of the responses to the questionnaire and visits to the countries, recommendations would be drawn up concerning the counter-terrorism arrangements in the participating countries (on the basis of the model of the first round of the EU counter-terrorism peer evaluation).

On 4/5 May, a seminar on cooperation between the EU and the Western Balkans countries in the fight against terrorism was organised in Prague by Eurojust in cooperation with the Czech Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior and the Czech Police.

ESDP

The EDA is focusing its counter-terrorism work in the prevent and respond strands.

PREVENT

Regarding knowledge management, the EDA is complementing the civilian effort to enhance security through analyst training.

RESPOND

In close cooperation with national experts, the EDA is developing the definition of national capabilities to counter improvised explosive devices (CIED).

Capabilities in the areas of CBRN Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) and CBRN Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) have been further developed.

First successful steps have been made in the work strand to Counter Man Portable Air Defense Systems (C-MANPADS).

The work on the creation of an EU-wide Maritime Surveillance (MARSUR) network for ESDP operations has continued.

An ongoing project aimed at enhancing Member States cooperation on Future Unmanned Aerial Systems (FUAS) will also improve capabilities for the European fight against terrorism.

EDA is developing a project on Personnel Recovery (PRE), which looks for solutions for the recovery of persons in an isolation situation in a theatre of operations, including in counter-terrorism operations.

Finally, EDA-led work on Soldier Centric Identification System (SCIS) is expected to significantly enhance the protection of European personnel on Counter Terrorist operations.
