

# G6 Meeting (Berlin)

## Home Department

### Written answers and statements, 24 March 2009

**Jacqui Smith** (Home Secretary; Redditch, Labour)

The informal G6 group of Interior Ministers from France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Poland and the **UK** held their most recent meeting in Berlin, Germany during the afternoon of 15 March. Germany currently holds the presidency of the G6 group. I attended on behalf of the United Kingdom. The meeting was divided into two working sessions, the first of which was attended by the core G6 Ministers. This group sat again for the second working session, with the additional attendance of the United States' Secretary of **Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano**.

The first working session was asked to consider three topics. First, Ministers discussed the future structure of the G6. Ministers agreed to dissolve the former G6 working group structures and return the format to high-level political discussions. No formal conclusions would be issued after meetings. Ministers were keen to extend invitations to G6 meetings to third countries on an issue-by-issue basis, where this could add value to discussions. I agreed with this streamlined approach.

Secondly, in advance of the meeting with the **US**, Ministers discussed ideas for a 'Transatlantic Agenda' between the EU and US on interior issues. Data sharing was the main area discussed, with reference to its implications for collaborative work on organised crime, counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism.

Thirdly, the G6 were invited to share their experiences and current best practice on issues relating to youth crime. Following the German shooting in **Baden-Wurtemberg** earlier in the week, Ministers discussed ways to identify vulnerable young people before they turned to violence. I identified the cross-over with radicalisation. I also outlined work the Government were doing to tackle knife and gang crime, and discussed regional initiatives designed to improve the relationship between young people and the police. The G6 presidency will now write a joint letter to the **EU Commission** and Council to inform them of the productive discussion, and propose a similar debate is raised at EU level.

Secretary Napolitano opened the second working session by outlining the new administration's desire to work closely with EU partners. The G6 welcomed the new **Minister** to the group. It was acknowledged that current policy and legal positions could constrain transatlantic data exchange. Secretary Napolitano stated that the US was keen to make progress with EU partners in this area, and described how a privacy officer had recently been appointed to her department. She will recommend that her new appointee meets with EU partners in the coming months in order to further discussion in this area.

The next meeting of the G6 will be held in the UK in the latter half of this year.