



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

of: Joint meeting of the Terrorism Working Party and COTER
on: 25th April 2013
Subject: Joint meeting of the Terrorism Working Party and COTER

1. Information on TWP work progress

The Chair of the TWP provided some information about the work carried out by the group to date and its programme for the remaining meeting in June. He mentioned in particular the work started on draft Council Conclusions calling for a revision of the Strategy on Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment, to be adopted by the Council in June. A draft had been discussed at the April TWP meeting. Radicalisation would also be on the agenda of the June meeting, together with the issues of strengthening the link between internal and external counter-terrorism activities and the EU capacity building in third countries.

2. Information on COTER work progress

The COTER Chair explained that COTER was continuing its work in line with its two core functions of promoting cooperation with other countries and looking at the policy bases and principles on which policy should take place. Upcoming meetings of COTER would focus on the link between counter-terrorism and development, the Counter-Terrorism Action Plan for Pakistan, the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, cooperation with key partners like the US, and the organisation of the EU-GCC dialogue on terrorist financing.

Human rights and radicalisation and recruitment, the EU political dialogues with third countries and multilateral engagements would also figure on the COTER agenda in June.

3. Risk assessment in the area of transport and border security:

a) Concealment of IED's in Office Equipment – Presentation by London Metropolitan Police (SO15)

A representative of the UK London Metropolitan Police made a presentation about the concealment of IEDs in office equipment such as postal packages.

b) Border Management Libya – Presentation by EEAS

A representative of the EEAS made a presentation about the situation in Libya and the planning and organisation of a CSDP civilian operation on border management. The Council will adopt a two years' mandate for the mission.

4. INTCEN: Presentation of a classified assessment on the impact of the 'Arab Spring'

A representative of IntCen made a presentation of a classified assessment (EU Confidential) on the impact of the « Arab Spring ».

5. Global Counter-Terrorism Forum: Recent developments and future activities – information by EEAS

A representative of the EEAS provided some information on the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum and on its recent developments and future activities. Among the recent developments, he mentioned the meeting of the Horn of Africa Region Capacity Building Working Group held in March, co-chaired by the EU and Turkey, aiming at establishing a platform between the states in the region and donors; the work towards the establishment of the international centre about the rule of law and criminal justice in Tunis, and the creation of an international centre to counter violent extremism in Abu Dhabi, that was opened in December. An information event about the GCTF would be organised in June in Brussels. Furthermore he highlighted that it would be important to strengthen cooperation with the JHA strands of activity in counter-terrorism and with JHA actors, bringing together practitioners such as police forces and prosecutors.

The involvement of JHA agencies such as Europol, Eurojust and Cefpol would be important. The participation of all EU MS to the GCTF would also be a positive signal.

6. Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Efforts and Co-operation – Presentation by the Head of Action against Crime Department, COE.

The Head of the Action against Crime Department in the Council of Europe gave an overview of the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of counter-terrorism. He explained the mandate and scope of the activity of the Committee of Experts on Terrorism of the Council of Europe (CODEXTER) and referred to a document of that Committee on possible areas of cooperation between the Council of Europe and the EU. Among the areas for future possible cooperation he mentioned combating terrorism while respecting the rule of law and fundamental human rights, countering radicalisation, and national counter-terrorism coordination. The CTC mentioned, as further possible areas for cooperation, the work of the Council of Europe in countries of the Arab Spring through its "Programme South" and its operational cooperation with Turkey.

7. Kidnapping of Citizens – Irish Consular Experience – Presentation by IE.

The IE delegation made a presentation about its national policy and experience on the kidnapping of citizens.

8. State Sponsored Terrorism – Presentation by Guest Service (EU CONFIDENTIAL)

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

9. Information on counter-terrorism activities:

a) EU CTC

The CTC said that he was preparing a paper on foreign fighters in consultation with the services of the Commission and the EEAS, to be presented to the Council on 7 June. The issue was complex and the paper did not aim to give any definitive answers to the problems, but rather to trigger the discussion in the Council and to offer ideas and proposals to the Ministers to take work forward. Member States had already contributed through the CTG, and any further input would be welcome.

The paper would underline the need to carry out a thorough analysis of the phenomenon of foreign fighters, to study more in depth motivations, travel patterns, role of some organisations as vehicles for radicalisation, and possible ways for financing. The paper would then look at possible areas of action, such as discouraging people from radicalizing and departing, improving possible counter-narratives, assistance to foreign fighters after their return, further engagement at local level with social workers, and aspects of legislation, investigation and prosecution. Cooperation with third countries would also be an important component in the policy to address the issue. It would be important to reflect on how to mobilise key players like Turkey, the Balkan States, and the Arab world.

Some delegations took the floor to express general support for the preliminary ideas expressed by the CTC. They underlined the importance of the external political aspect. SIS could play an increased role in addressing the issue if used at its full potential; PNR would be an essential tool and it would be important to send a strong signal to the European Parliament in this respect.

b) European Commission

The Commission informed the groups that it would hold a meeting on 27 May to prepare the EU programme to counter violent extremism, announced by Commissioner Malstrom at the Council in March. Invitations would be sent out soon.

Furthermore, it announced that it would not present any proposal under Article 75 TFEU at this stage. A study had been outsourced to analyse different options for an EU system, and to assess its merits in relation to existing mechanisms, and its outcome indicated that such an EU system would produce only limited concrete results.

Some delegations suggested the reflection on this issue should be continued in view of the requirements of Article 75 TFEU. It would be important to establish coherence between the lists of "external" and "internal" persons, groups or entities involved in terrorist acts.

Finally, the Commission provided some information on a meeting of the RAN internal/external working group held on 22 April. The meeting had dealt with the issue of foreign fighters travelling from Europe to Syria. Turkey had been invited to this meeting and would also be invited in the future.

c) EEAS

A representative of the EEAS underlined the need to ensure closer coordination and cooperation between JHA and MFA actors, in particular in view of the expertise required to build capacity in key countries.

10. AOB

- Information Point from Presidency Regarding Council Conclusions on Radicalisation.

The Presidency provided information on the draft Council Conclusions calling for an update of the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism. The issue of radicalisation counted among the priorities of the TWP for the semester. The purpose of the draft conclusions was to start the process by which a review of the strategy can occur.
