



## Menu

### Written statement to Parliament G6: Barcelona

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**From:** Home Office (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office>) and The Rt Hon **Theresa May MP** (<https://www.gov.uk/government/people/theresa-may>)

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This written ministerial statement was laid on 7 July 2014 in the House of Commons by Theresa May and in the House of Lords by Lord Taylor of Holbeach.



#### **Secretary of State for the Home Department (Theresa May):**

The informal G6 group of interior ministers from the 6 largest European Union countries, plus representatives from the United States of America, the European Commission and FRONTEX, held its most recent meeting in Barcelona on 25 and 26 June 2014.

The summit was chaired by the Spanish Interior Minister Jorge Fernández Díaz and I represented the United Kingdom. The other participating states were represented by Thomas De Maizière (Germany), Angelino Alfano (Italy), and Bernard Cazeneuve (France). Poland was represented at official level. James Cole (the Deputy US Attorney General), Alejandro Mayorkas (US Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security), Cecilia Malmstrom (European Commissioner for Home Affairs) and Gil Arias (Executive Director of FRONTEX) attended as guests.

The first formal session (attended by the G6 members only) was an analysis of the evolution of G6. It was agreed to keep the G6 in its present shape and format.

The second formal session concerned the fight against jihadist terrorism and radicalisation with a focus on co-operation with Northern Africa, the Sahel and Middle Eastern countries. Discussion centred on the problems caused by conflicts in these regions and the issues caused by foreign fighters travelling to join these conflicts then returning to EU member states. Delegates noted the evolution of the terrorist threat and how it had been shaped by these factors. The importance of information sharing and the role of the EU Passenger Name Record (PNR) directive in this was agreed by all. I stressed the need for the wording of the draft directive to be robust and it was agreed that bilateral cooperation was essential in the interim.

The third formal session related to the fight against drug trafficking in the Atlantic. The presidency noted that while this was a problem for the western hemisphere generally, it was a particular concern for Spain. A number of delegates stressed the point that the use and classification of development funds must be considered to address these problems at their root. The US said they were working with a number of countries on this issue and were happy to continue to do so and to share the experience and knowledge they have. I raised the point

that the money generated by the international drug trade helped to support terrorism and that practical cooperation to address this was therefore essential.

The discussion at the formal dinner on 25 June focused on the fight against irregular immigration in Europe. I stressed the need for action in the countries of origin and for member states to fulfil their responsibilities for effective asylum processing and border controls. Italy made the point that their Mare Nostrum programme could not remain in place indefinitely and gave their view that it should be replaced by a European equivalent. Concerns were voiced however that, while the programme had undoubted humanitarian benefits, it nevertheless acted as a pull factor for migrants to the region. Doubts were also expressed by some about the idea of Frontex undertaking a more operational role in the Mediterranean.

The formal lunch on 26 June was an opportunity to discuss relations between the EU and the US. The conversation was positive and members agreed the need for the EU and US to cooperate closely in operational joint initiatives. Specific measures such as the PNR Agreement, the agreement on processing and transfer of financial data messaging relating to the Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme (TFTP), and the EUROPOL-US Agreement were seen to be helpful tools to strengthen operational cooperation in common fields of interest.

The next G6 meeting will take place in France, but the date has not yet been confirmed.

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