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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 14 July 2015
To: Terrorism Working Party
Subject: Summary of discussions

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in CM 3299/15.

2. Presentation of the Luxembourg Presidency and its programmes for TWP and COTER

The Presidency presented its programme for the next six months: meetings on 9 September, 21 October and 17 November and a joint TWP/COTER meeting on 22 October 2015.

Within the overall priority of combating terrorism, the Presidency will focus on the implementation of the renewed Internal Security Strategy, radicalisation (incl. in prisons) - a conference would be held in Brussels on 19-20 October 2015 - islamophobia, withdrawal of travel documents, link between organised crime and terrorism, returnees programmes, Western Balkans (WB) (ongoing SI/AT initiative).

The COTER president briefly presented the COTER programme, underlining that a close cooperation with TWP was essential, drawing upon synergies. The joint TWP/COTER meeting in October would, among other things, concentrate on WB.

3. Information by the Presidency

The Chair briefed on the outcome of the June Council meetings (JHA/FAC/GAC) and European Council on 26 June 2015, insofar as they dealt with the "Fight against terrorism". It had been concluded that tangible progress had been achieved within recent months in the fight against terrorism in accordance with the statement of Heads of State or Government of 12 February and the FAC conclusions of 9 February - but that the momentum should be kept, mentioning in that context the most recent terrorist attacks of Friday 26 June in France, Kuwait and Tunisia. The Chair went more into detail with progress achieved: a list of common risk indicators had been issued by the Commission on 15 June, and should now be implemented; the Schengen Border Guards' Handbook had been updated accordingly, with the aim of reinforcing the application of the Schengen framework. An Internet Referral Unit (IRU) had been established by 1 July 2015 (pilot phase) within Europol to step up the cooperation in combating radicalisation on Internet; the RAN (Radicalisation Awareness Network) Centre of Excellence was about to be launched. The Presidency would be aiming at adopting a Decision to sign the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Terrorism Convention incriminating travel of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (implementing the requirements regarding FTF related offences as laid down in the UN Security Council Resolution 2178(2014)) and the mother Convention on behalf of the EU at the October JHA Council.

At the JHA Council of 16 June 2015, a number of Member States had asked for more to be done, in particular in relation to radicalisation and the decommissioning of firearms as well as better tackling the illegal trade thereof. On PNR, it was mentioned that on 23 June 2015, the GAC adopted a Decision to authorise the opening of negotiations for an agreement between the EU and Mexico for the transfer and use of PNR data to prevent and combat terrorism and other serious transnational crime. Finally the Presidency informed about the LIBE committee vote on the amendments on the EU-PNR proposal to take place on 15 July 2015, expressing hope that this would break the long deadlock. At the informal JHA-Council on 9-10 July 2015, Ministers had discussed how information exchange between Member States on issues relating to terrorism, still considered a very sensitive issue, could be improved.

4. Latest incidents of significant interest - Information from Member States

Delegations reported on recent terrorism-related incidents, operations and arrests which had taken place in their respective countries since the last TWP meeting as well as trends noticed. Ten delegations took the floor, a number of which gave the updated figures on individuals (either nationals or individuals having their usual residence in the Member States concerned) linked to jihad in Syria and Iraq, the number of foreign terrorist fighters leaving for the combat zone, in transit, returnees, etc. In most countries the number of foreign terrorist fighters was on the increase. Up to 1/3 of those leaving to mainly Syria were women, and approximately 40 % under 25 years old. NL reported that within recent months, none of those who had left had returned. NL considered developing sex-specific policies and asked for other Member States possible practices in relation to female foreign terrorist fighters, suggesting that it had become more difficult to leave Syria/Iraq. On 1 July 2015, ES had introduced new legislation, among others reforming the penal code, with significant changes in relation to terrorism: simplified, no link was any longer required between terrorism and belonging to a group, the chapter on hate crime had been reinforced, among other things sentences had been increased, and in relation to protection of citizens new early alert systems would be introduced.

5. INTCEN programme (EU RESTRICTED)

IntCen presented its work programme for the next six months. A report covering the first six months of 2015 would be presented at the September TWP meeting; in October would follow a first thematic paper: an analysis on links between Islamic terrorism and organised crime inside Europe, in November a second thematic paper on radicalisation in prisons. At the joint TWP-COTER meeting in October two thematic papers would be submitted: one on terrorist routes and hubs and another one on extremists' travel: patterns and trends.

6. TE-SAT Report 2015 and The Dumas Group

Europol presented the TE-SAT report 2015 and the Dumas Group. The EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT) was produced by analysts and experts at Europol, drawing on contributions from EU Member States and external partners. The EU Internet Referral Unit (IRU) had been set up on 1 July 2015 for a one-year pilot phase (to be assessed by the end of this year), reaching full capacity from 1 July 2016 - "*extending CT capabilities from off-line to on-line*". Member States were encouraged to contribute/cooperate. FR declared its entire support, stressing however that in particular in relation to intelligence-sharing, some fine-tuning would be needed. Requested by Paris, Europol-representatives had come to explain the recent initiatives and new set-up. [Europol declared itself ready to come to capitals to explain the new set-up, if asked.] Finally, it was mentioned that entries into the Focal Point *Travellers* continued to increase, but could still be improved.

7. The Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)

The head of the RAN (Radicalisation Awareness Network) secretariat presented RAN activities and developments since April 2012 and the new "Centre of Excellence" (mainly consisting of an upgraded secretariat) to be launched in autumn. "First-line practitioners and prevention are key" were some of its overall recommendations. Five deliverables had been settled upon: RAN support to MSs, collection of best practices, review of helplines, recommendations on prison regimes and finally an education manifesto.

8. Radicalisation - Hotlines

FR and AT presented national initiatives on preventive measures against radicalisation. The FR delegate focused on the Counter Radicalisation Department, which was part of the Ministry of Interior and the CNAPR (Centre National d'Assistance de la Prevention de la Radicalisation) aka the hotline established in April 2014, manned with eight police officers. Main objective was to help families, and secondly to detect new threats, gathering information and analysing radicalisation trends. The hotline continued to receive a high number of calls, approximately half of them from the Paris region. Mainly families (mainly mothers) called. AT presented its "Extremism Information Centre", established in December 2014 as a nationwide point of contact for parents, teachers, social workers, etc.

9. Western Balkans counter-terrorism initiative - state of play

The SI chair of the Western Balkans Counter Terrorism initiative gave an overview of activities since the start in November 2014 and of the context - geographical scope and existing initiatives. An action plan had now been elaborated, and draft Council Conclusions would be submitted in autumn, to be endorsed first by TWP, then by COSI on 24 November 2015 with a view to being adopted at the December JHA Council.

10. Information on counter terrorism activities

– Commission

The Commission distributed invitation for a one-day seminar on 24 July 2015 within the EU Internet Forum on "Awareness raising session between the internet and social media companies and EU Member States" to be held with industry. A second seminar would be held in autumn focusing on the production of counter-narratives.

11. AOB

No issues were raised under AOB.
