



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 2 February 2015
(OR. en)

5853/15

LIMITE

CO EUR-PREP 6

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee

Subject: Informal meeting of the Heads of State or Government
- Draft statement of the Members of the European Council

Delegations will find below the draft statement prepared by the President of the European Council, in close cooperation with the member of the European Council representing the Member State holding the six-monthly Presidency of the Council and with the President of the Commission.

DRAFT

STATEMENT OF THE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

12 FEBRUARY 2015

Europeans have reacted with deep sorrow and strong unity to the recent terrorist attacks in Paris. These attacks targeted the fundamental values and human rights that are at the heart of the European Union - solidarity, freedom, including freedom of expression, pluralism, democracy, tolerance and human dignity. All citizens have the right to live free from fear whatever their beliefs. We will safeguard our common values and protect all from violence based on ethnic or religious motivations such as xenophobia, anti-Semitism or anti-Muslim intolerance and racism.

This also means fighting the enemies of these values. We will further reinforce our action against terrorist threats. Today, we agreed on the following to guide work over the months to come:

1. Ensuring the security of citizens

The security of citizens is an immediate necessity. We must better implement the tools we have and further develop them. We ask that:

- EU legislators adopt urgently the proposal on European Passenger Name Record with solid data protection safeguards;
- full use is made of the existing Schengen framework, and that external borders are also reinforced, including through a targeted amendment of the Schengen Borders Code, to allow for systematic checks against all relevant databases in order to detect and disrupt suspect movements, notably of foreign terrorist fighters;
- law enforcement authorities step up information sharing and operational cooperation, including through Europol and via Eurojust;
- all competent authorities increase cooperation in the fight against illicit firearms, including by a swift adaptation of the relevant legislation;
- Member States' security services deepen their cooperation;
- Member States quickly implement the strengthened anti-money laundering framework, and that all competent authorities step up action to trace financial flows and to freeze assets used for financing terrorism.

2. Preventing radicalisation and safeguarding values

Preventing radicalisation is a key element of the fight against terrorism. Instruments need to be brought together in a comprehensive approach to address this phenomenon. We call for:

- monitoring and removal of content promoting terrorism or violence on the internet, including through greater cooperation between public authorities and the private sector at EU level;
- communication strategies to promote tolerance, non-discrimination, fundamental freedoms and solidarity throughout the EU, including through stepping up inter-faith and other community dialogue;
- initiatives regarding education, vocational training, job opportunities, social integration and rehabilitation in the judicial context to address factors contributing to radicalisation.

3. Cooperating with our international partners

The EU's external relations must also contribute to countering the terrorist threat. We need:

- to address crises and conflicts, in particular in our Southern Neighbourhood, through a strategic rethinking of our approach;
- to engage more on security issues and counter-terrorism with third countries, in particular in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), including through new capacity building projects with partners and better targeted EU assistance to address the underlying factors of radicalisation in the MENA region;
- sustained and coordinated international engagement with the UN and Global Counter Terrorism Forum as well as with relevant regional initiatives;
- a dialogue among cultures and civilisations to promote together fundamental freedoms.

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Over the last weeks the Council has carried out important work. The European Union will take this work forward promptly, fully involving the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator and the Member States. The Commission will present in April a proposal for a comprehensive European Agenda on Security. The Council will report on the detailed implementation of these orientations by the June European Council.