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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	12494/19; 13221/1/19 REV 1
Subject:	Right-wing violent extremism and terrorism - follow-up

Based on the EU threat assessment in the field of terrorism endorsed by the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI) in May 2019, the Presidency, emphasising the need to address terrorism in all its forms, introduced the discussion on right-wing violent extremism and terrorism in the Working Party on Terrorism (TWP) meeting of 12 September 2019. The discussion was facilitated by a discussion paper provided by the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator¹ and was followed by a discussion in COSI on 26 September 2019, based on a discussion paper drafted by the Presidency². In general, Member States supported the idea of working jointly to prevent and combat right-wing violent extremism and terrorism.

At the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council on 8 October 2019³, right-wing violent extremism and terrorism was deemed a topical issue. Ministers endorsed the Presidency's suggestion to continue the work in the relevant Council structures, based on the following four work strands:

¹ 11756/19 + ADD 1
² 12225/19
³ 12494/19

1. creating a better situational overview of right-wing violent extremism and terrorism;
2. developing and sharing good practices on how to strengthen the prevention, detection and addressing of all forms of violent extremism and terrorism;
3. addressing the spread of unlawful right-wing extremist content online and offline; and
4. cooperating with key third countries, including by addressing the topic in counter-terrorism dialogues.

It was also acknowledged that this work shall also address violent extremism and terrorism stemming from other extreme political movements.

Based on this tasking, the Presidency suggests to the TWP the following way forward to address right-wing violent extremism and terrorism:

1. Better situational overview

In order to arrive at a better understanding of the extent of the challenge across the European Union, the Commission (together with the Network of Prevent Policy Makers and with Europol and Eurojust, as appropriate, each within their mandate) is invited to map out national legal and policy frameworks and statistics for the phenomenon as appropriate. This mapping should also include banned texts, symbols and associations linked with right-wing violent extremism and terrorism (if categorised as such in Member States). Member States are invited to provide the relevant information to the Commission.

The dedicated Working Group on Hate Crime Recording, Data Collection and Encouraging Reporting established by the High Level Group on Combating Racist and Hate Speech in October 2018 is invited to consider adjusting their working methods in order to record the motivation behind hate crime in crime recording and data collection.

In due course, Member States are invited to consider developing a data model with the aim of increasing clarity and comparability in statistics on right-wing violent extremist offences.

The Commission and Member States are invited to support research on terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms, to increase cooperation with researchers and to promote better use of EU funding instruments.

2. Development and sharing of good practices

Member States are invited to share their experiences on how to prevent and address right-wing violent extremist terrorism and other forms of right-wing extremist violence, including exit and disengagement programmes, risk analysis related to radicalised persons, and the prevention of radicalisation in prisons, in line with the Council conclusions in 9366/19.

The Commission is invited to continue supporting the development and exchange of good practices on how to prevent, detect and address all forms of extremist violence and terrorism, including right-wing violent extremism and terrorism, taking into account the work done by the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) and the European Strategic Communications Network (ESCN), including in the context of the prevention of radicalisation, and disengagement programmes.

3. Addressing the spread of unlawful right-wing extremist content online and offline

The Commission and Member States are invited to continue to engage with internet companies in the EU Internet Forum to address challenges and seek possible solutions regarding illegal right-wing violent extremist and terrorist content and to closely involve the EU Internet Referral Unit (IRU) in this regard. The EU IRU is invited to increase efforts to refer violent extremist and terrorist online content irrespective of its motivation, taking into account the resources available.

The Commission's hate speech dialogue under the Code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online also focuses on illegal right-wing extremist, racist and xenophobic hate speech. The Commission will be invited to inform the Council about the ecosystems of right-wing extremist hate-speech content online on the basis of the information gathered through studies or the activities in the context of the dialogue under the Code of conduct. Based on the work of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) and the European Strategic Communications Network (ESCN) the Commission is encouraged to support further work in understanding and analysing the ways in which the violent extreme-right exploits and mainstreams its narratives both online and offline and to explore appropriate responses in close cooperation between practitioners, policy makers and researchers.

4. Cooperation with third countries

The EEAS and the Commission are invited to explore how to support the Western Balkan partners in tackling right-wing violent extremism and terrorism as part of their counter-terrorism efforts, including in the framework of the implementation of the Joint Action Plan on Counter-Terrorism for the Western Balkans.

The EU should discuss the issue in counter-terrorism dialogues with strategic partners, such as the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, with a view to sharing threat analyses and good practices, and should strengthen cooperation in this area, both online and offline.

