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*(Information)***COUNCIL****COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION****of 6 December 2001****setting a common scale for assessing threats to public figures visiting the European Union**

(2001/C 356/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union,

Having regard to the need to improve cooperation between Member States in the field of the prevention of terrorism,

Having regard to the proliferation of movements of official public figures from the Member States or from non-Union States within the territory of the Union,

Whereas these events lead to the putting in place of static and dynamic protective measures which must be equal to the task of providing a reasonable, serious assessment of the likely terrorist threat to these public figures;

Whereas the exchange of information between the Member States' police and security services on the assessment of the level of such threat by the services responsible for that task should be facilitated;

Whereas the assessment applies to the country visited, it being understood that the assessment of the country of residence of official public figures will be taken into account,

HEREBY RECOMMENDS that the Member States:

1. step up the volume and quality of the exchange of information of the assessment of the terrorist threat to official public figures visiting the countries of the Union, without creating new institutional structures and in the framework of the relevant national legislation. This consultation may, at the request of a Member State, take place particularly during the period preceding such visits;
2. duly designate (a) competent service(s) to assess this threat and to forward information in this context. This list will be drawn up and subsequently updated by the Presidency-in-office and forwarded to the Member States;

3. adopt the simple, practical evaluation scale set out in the Annex hereto, based on figures and/or letters which will permit swift exchanges between national contact points. This scale will measure the terrorist threat in so far as it can be analysed rationally, and not the policing measures or arrangements put in place, the choice of which is the responsibility of each State. It will be used in consultations between States, although its use in the internal activities of the countries' services will not be obligatory;

4. ensure the confidentiality of information forwarded in the context of this Recommendation, with particular regard to non-Union States whose official public figures are the subject of an assessment. This information, which will be used solely for the purpose of the prevention of terrorism, must not be communicated to third countries or utilised in judicial proceedings without the agreement of the issuing State;

5. use the network of liaison offices to forward information and ensure that requests and replies are forwarded rapidly to the competent service(s);

6. participate in assessment exchanges in so far as such participation does not seriously harm national interests;

7. examine the results of this cooperation within three years of its full introduction;

8. associate Europol with this cooperation in so far as the latter may fall within Europol's mandate.

Done at Brussels, 6 December 2001.

For the Council

The President

M. VERWILGHEN

ANNEX

EVALUATION SCALE

1. IMMEDIATE

Specific intelligence showing that an attack on the specified VIP is imminent.

2. HIGH

Specific intelligence, or recent terrorist activity indicating that the VIP could be the high priority target of a terrorist group.

3. SIGNIFICANT

Recent general intelligence, the political or security context of which indicates that the VIP could be a priority target for a terrorist group.

4. MODERATE

No specific or general intelligence of a particular threat, but there is a potential threat in view of the factors linked to the VIP or to the country he/she represents.

5. LOW

No elements giving reasonable cause to foresee a terrorist act.

The letter 'Z' (Zulu) could be used to flag the existence of a real threat of non-life-threatening hostile acts towards the VIP (throwing objects, jostling, etc.)
