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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security
No. prev. doc.:	8434/17
Subject:	Discussion paper on interoperability in the light of the recommendations by the High-Level Expert Group on Information Systems and Interoperability

The Commission in its Communication on Stronger and Smarter Information Systems for Borders and Security of 6 April 2016¹ highlighted the need to improve the interoperability of information systems as a long-term objective, as also identified by the European Council and the Council, and presented ideas on how information systems could be developed in the future to ensure that border guards, customs authorities, police officers and judicial authorities have the necessary information, especially identity information, at their disposal.

¹ 7644/16

In this Communication the Commission also announced the setting up of the High-Level Expert Group on Information Systems and Interoperability, tasked to address the legal, technical and operational aspects of the different options to achieve interoperability of information systems, including the necessity, technical feasibility and proportionality of available options and their data protection implications.

The final report with the recommendations by the High-Level Expert Group is set out in 8434/17.

The Commission is expected to express its position in relation to the final report by the High-Level Expert Group in its Seventh Security Union report to the Council and the European Parliament on 16 May 2017, and present it to the COSI on the same day. In order to allow the Member States to also express their position, the Presidency intends to prepare draft Council Conclusions on the way forward to improve information exchange and ensure interoperability of EU information systems to be adopted by the JHA Council on 8-9 June 2017.

In order to prepare the Council Conclusions and the ground for the future work on the subject of interoperability and in the light of the recommendations by the High-Level Expert Group and the position taken by the Commission on the way forward, ***the Presidency invites COSI, given its central role in relation to the topic of interoperability of EU databases and its impact for increased operational cooperation, to discuss and indicate whether it agrees that:***

(1) In relation to the three dimensions of interoperability, the Council should invite the Commission, depending on the outcome of feasibility studies, and where relevant, to make legislative proposals by the beginning of 2018 in order to implement interoperability solutions. In particular and in the preparation for such proposals the Commission, together or in cooperation with eu-LISA and, where relevant, other stakeholders should:

(A) work towards creating a European search portal capable of searching in parallel all relevant EU systems;

(B) explore the future implementation of a shared biometric matching service for all types of biometric data including as well as its possible use for the purpose of flagging the existence of biometric data from other systems;

(C) explore the future establishment of a common identity repository of alphanumeric identity data;

(2) The Council should follow-up on the outcome of the High-Level Expert Group by accompanying and providing guidance for the work towards interoperability to be carried out by the Commission and by the EU Agencies in the JHA area in a dedicated Council forum.

(3) As regards the Roadmap to enhance information exchange and information management including interoperability solutions in the Justice and Home Affairs area², it should be ensured that it becomes a single comprehensive tool, incorporating those recommendations of the Expert Group that are considered relevant by the Council, as well as Actions aimed at implementing the Information Management Strategy and all other relevant Actions contributing to the guidance, implementation and monitoring of various activities aimed at improving information management and interoperability of EU information systems for border management, migration and security. This is without prejudice to the need for an appropriate working mandate for the dedicated Council forum referred to under point (2) above.

² 9368/1/16 REV 1