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Delegations will find attached the partially declassified version of the above-mentioned document.

  

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**ANNEX**

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**Brussels, 18 July 2005**

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**NOTE**

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from : General Secretariat

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to : Working Party on Terrorism

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Subject : Evaluation of National Anti-Terrorist Arrangements  
Report about Latvia, 25-29 April 2005

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## Evaluation of Latvia, 25-29 April 2005

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## **1. Terrorism Situation**

According to the competent authorities, the fact that there are no organisations or persons of the radical Islam suspected in planned terrorism activities in Latvia could be explained by the insignificant number of their supporters in the State.

However, when in April 2004, Latvia became a member of the NATO, fully supporting the NATO military operations and actions within the anti-terrorism campaign, that potentially may lead to a higher terrorism risk against objects and persons.

### **1.1 Domestic Terrorism**

During the time period between 1995 till 2001, a few incidents with explosives and with signs of terrorism took place in Latvia, but further investigation showed, that they had no terrorist but criminal or public disorder motivations.

### **1.2 International Terrorism**

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Some persons related to international organisations of fundamental Islam had been seeking for cooperation with Latvian business structures, carrying out illegal trade actions as well as using the system of the Latvian commercial banks for money transfer to their fellows.

A few representatives of the State's Muslim Diaspora had been in contact with foreign Muslims related to Islamist terrorists.

However, no single case is reported that persons from national or international "Lists of Terrorists" would be identified in Latvia.

## **2. Structure of Authorities**

### **2.1 General Situation**

The Lets, which were Indo-European-Balts, arrived around 2500 BC, gradually assimilating the Finno-Ugric Livs who had settled in this area since 6000 BC.

Since the 11th century, Germans, Swedes, Poles and Russians have been present in Latvia. After 1721 Russia gained control of the Eastern Baltic.

In 1918, after the end of World War I, Latvia gained independence, which came to an end with World War II. When in 1944/45 the Soviet regime was restored, Latvia became fully integrated in the Soviet Union and was subject to collectivisation and central planning.

In 1991, Latvia regained its independence, followed by the installation of democracy and of a market economy, and leading to Latvia's accession to both the NATO and the EU in 2004.

The Latvian population today is about 2.4 Million, about 1/3 living in the capital Riga and its surroundings.

### **2.2 Political and Security Structure**

Latvia's Constitution entered into force in 1922; its application was interrupted in 1940 and reintroduced in 1991.

The Parliament is a unicameral assembly of 100 members, electing the President for a four years, once renewable, term.

In Latvia there is a three-level administration with a central government in Riga, 26 districts and 550 local self-governments.

The Ministries mainly involved in the field of combating terrorism in Latvia are the Ministries of the Interior, Justice, Defence, Finance and Foreign Affairs.

On the agencies level the main competent institutions are the Security Police and the Constitution Protection Bureau, assisted by State Police, Border Guard, Prosecutor's Office, Courts, and Military Intelligence and Security Service.

### **3. Conclusions**

When in April 2003, the "Action Plan in the Fight against Terrorism" was completed, it provided a solid basis for a coordinated approach in preventing and fighting terrorism in Latvia.

As a next important step the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Centre within the Security Police since February 2005 is regarded.

#### **3.1. Good Practices**

##### **3.1.1 Security Police as Intelligence and Law Enforcement Service**

The Security Police is the main body responsible for the fight against terrorism. Having both the functions of a security service and of a police, it is competent for intelligence gathering, preventive measures, crisis management and investigation. The Security Police carries out operational activities in order to forecast, prevent and neutralise threats to the national security.

##### **3.1.2 Special Investigative Techniques**

The officers of the Security Police in fulfilling their tasks have the legal power to use all special investigative techniques and equipments.

### **3.1.3 Counter-Terrorism Coordination Centre**

In order to improve the coordination mechanism, the Cabinet of Ministers decided to establish and elaborate the Counter-Terrorism Coordination Centre<sup>1</sup> within the Security Police with the tasks to

- analyse the efficiency of the country's antiterrorism policy;
- analyse the threat posed by terrorism to the country and to organise the counter-measures in order to ensure the permanent readiness to prevent and combat terrorism;
- organise a unified and coherent implementation of the necessary counter-terrorism measures facilitating an efficient coordination of all bodies involved.

Moreover, this Centre is delegated a national central point for all terrorism related coordination matters.

Though the Counter-Terrorism Coordination Centre still has to prove its functioning, the conception is fully in line with the recommendation of the Interim Report<sup>2</sup>.

## **3.2 Recommendations**

### **3.2.1 Staff Exchange**

As an appropriate means to enhance the cooperation among law enforcement and security services some Member States have developed common training programs and a structured exchange of staff.

To continue the efforts of Latvia, already undertaken in the different common training programs to improve the mutual knowledge and acceptance of the tasks and needs of the respective security and law enforcement bodies, regardless of the reported good cooperation, Latvian authorities are recommended to reflect about a structured exchange of staff wherever appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> By Order No 927 of 26 November 2004, Internal Regulations of the Centre approved on 1 February 2005;

Moreover, since the Security Polices number of staff is relatively small, each officer has his individual field of competence and the absence of only a few officers already negatively influences the work, it is recommended to establish joint investigation groups in appropriate criminal cases with the participating of representatives of both the Security Police and the State Police.

### **3.2.2 Security Police's Access to other Databases**

In Latvia each security authority operates its own databases, information is provided upon request.

Though a regular, close and trustful exchange of information is reported, Latvian authorities are recommended to provide the Security Police as the domestic security service with the legal possibility to have access to the national security related databases as described in the Interim Report.

### **3.2.3 Safe Communication Structure**

Since a fast and safe electronic exchange of information between the different Latvian services is not in place, the Latvian authorities are recommended to provide for the necessary measures to realise a communication net between the responsible national and international services in a safe, highly qualified and real time manner.

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<sup>2</sup> Doc. 14306/3/04 REV 3 ENFOPOL 155