



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 31 October 2012

**15584/1/12
REV 1**

LIMITE

**COPS 414
JAI 744
COSI 93**

COVER NOTE

From: General Secretariat
To: Delegations
Subject: Political and Security Committee (PSC)
Standing Committee on operational cooperation on internal security (COSI)
- Summary of discussions held on 2 October 2012

Delegations will find enclosed the joint letter of the PSC Chair, Ambassador Olof Skoog and of the COSI Chair, Permanent Secretary Stelios Himonas on the above subject.

Summary of discussions**1. Organised Crime in the Western Balkans**

On the basis of a discussion paper by COSI and an information paper by the EEAS/CMPD (docs 14279/12 and 14317/12 RESTREINT UE) delegations had an exchange of views on improving the cooperation between the JHA actors and CSDP in fighting organised crime in the Western Balkans, in particular in the field of information exchange, project coordination and tackling the trade and smuggling of illegal weapons. CMPD recalled that there is a long history in coordinating different activities and instruments used by the EU and its Members States to fight OC but there is always scope for doing better.

Delegations acknowledged the importance of the Western Balkans region for the EU's internal security and the need to improve coordination both at political and operational level. Various MS stressed the importance of Chapters 23 and 24 of the accession process in reducing organised crime in the Western Balkans, confirming that the enlargement process is impacting the global approach. In that respect several delegations supported including OC issues in political dialogue taking into account the link to the enlargement perspective. Improved information exchange (within sound legal framework), better coordination of activities as well as capacity building of Western Balkans countries law enforcement and border authorities were also frequently mentioned.

The Commission welcomed regular dialogue between PSC and COSI and called for a more systematic way of tackling (following-up) OC in the Western Balkans. The issue should be high on the EU agenda including of the upcoming meetings (e.g. the October JHA Council, the November ministerial in Tirana, high level conference on firearms). COM also stressed the need to federate bilateral and regional activities to EU level and underlined the importance of the efforts carried out in the EU Policy Cycle on the fight against OC in the WB.

The COSI Chair encouraged the competent Joint Expert Panels (JEPs), in particular JEPS 2 and 6, and the Driver of the Operational Action Plan on the Western Balkans (IT) to continue their efforts at improving information exchange and project coordination.

2. Strengthening ties between CSDP and FSJ - Implementation of the Road Map

EEAS (CMPD) presented the first progress report setting out the state-of-play in implementing the Road Map. Member States' experts have been strongly involved in the work, together with EU JHA Agencies, through joint expert panels with the task to identify potential deliverables for the 12 lines of action to be initiated in the short-term. Intensive work has generated a lot of findings. However, the working method used has proved very cumbersome which calls for a more flexible and leaner approach. Work on the findings will continue with a view to a next review at the end of year.

Several delegations took the floor expressing appreciation for the work done under CMPD-lead. MS shared the need to streamline the present working method while keeping the process as transparent and inclusive as possible. Various delegations underlined the need to further elaborate the findings so far with a view to provide Member States with more concrete, prioritised and clustered proposals for proper validation as the work progresses.

All who spoke agreed that the methodology should be reviewed by CMPD and the "Informal CSDP/FSJ Core Team" to maximize effectiveness, that there is a need for transparency with the Host Country (HC) and respect for the mandate. CMPD proposed to keep the Member States engaged and informed; depending on progress, a further review could be envisaged by the end of the year.

3. Tackling cyber threats in EU internal and external security

The meeting had an initial exchange of views on the role that PSC, law enforcement authorities and the European Cybercrime Centre (EC3) could play with regard to tackling cyber threats to the EU's internal and external security. The importance of the Centre was highlighted to contribute both to harmonising the different approaches to this global issue and to serving as an information focal point, to act as a pool of cybercrime expertise and best practices as well as a training centre. Europol explained the state of play of the EC3 process of implementation.

EEAS presented its planning and current activities in the field of cyber security, as part of the preparation of a European cyber-security strategy by the Commission. Delegations mentioned the need for a global, integrated, holistic and multidisciplinary approach of the issue, including the external security dimension and the need for a coordination mechanism at the European level for different cyber policy areas

Delegations also acknowledged the dependency of the European citizens on internet and computer systems, recalled the challenge that Cybercrime poses to the use of such tools, raised the role of EC3 in the exchange of information, including, where appropriate, third countries, and highlighted the importance of ensuring that Member States' views are taken on board in the preparation of the strategy.

4. Sahel and Libya

EEAS (CMPD) briefly informed delegations on the latest developments regarding planning for possible CSDP actions in Libya and in Sahel. Developments in Mali and in Libya have a potential impact on the EU's interests including regarding internal security. In both cases, the planning is being developed in close co-operation with the national authorities and other international actors. Synergies are needed through the different EU instruments.

The situation in Sahel is getting worse, affecting EU security interests: terrorists, failing States and spill over risks. In Niger, the EU will deliver support through a CSDP mission to the Nigerien National Security Forces to help enable them to control their territory. EUCAP SAHEL Niger, will initially be deployed to Niger but with a regional dimension underlined by the deployment of liaison officers to both Mali and Mauritania. Their main task will be to examine developments in both countries with a view to the possible future expansion of the mission's geographical mandate. The mission's strategic objective is to contribute to improving the capacities of Nigerien Security Forces (Gendarmerie, Garde Nationale and Police Nationale) in their fight against terrorism and organised crime. Regarding the relation with INTERPOL, work is ongoing on the West African Police Information System (WAPIS), a project that is jointly put in place by INTERPOL, ECOWAS and the EU. This system will facilitate the collection, management, sharing and analysis of police information at national, regional and global level to more effectively combat drugs trafficking, illegal immigration, money laundering and weapons trafficking.

On Libya, on the basis of the needs assessment mission, there is an agreement to prepare a Crisis Management Concept for a CSDP Mission on border security. As always, CSDP action depends on the right kind of personnel provided by Member States and COSI delegates were encouraged to communicate this back in order to organize the necessary support with regard to recruitment for the missions. CMPD underlined that the EU tried to optimize its activities with specialized organizations: for example FRONTEX has been associated from the beginning of the planning and it will be invited to the next Fact Finding Mission. CMPD insisted on the importance of ensuring, via cooperation and coordination between the various EU stakeholders and tools, the sustainability of the results.

Delegations underlined that these cases were perfect examples of the links between internal and external security, as well as of the importance of the comprehensive approach to tackling them. The situation in Sahel might amplify the risk of terrorist attacks inside the EU. CSDP in that case is an instrument also providing benefit to internal security for the EU. Other potential impacts on the internal security of the EU included THB, illegal immigration, and drugs. Threats to regional stability could also lead to an increase of asylum applications in the EU.



Ambassador Olof Skoog
PSC Chair



Dr Stelios Himonas
COSI Chair