



Brussels, 3 April 2017
(OR. en)

7732/17

COSI 64
COMIX 225
JAI 285

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
On: 14 March 2017
To: Delegations

Subject: Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security
(COSI)

MIXED COMMITTEE

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda set out in 7088/17 was adopted with the deletion of item 11 (Europol - Denmark). This item was put on the agenda for the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Counsellors' meeting on 16 March 2017.

2. Information from the Presidency

The Presidency updated the Committee on the possible discussion items for the informal COSI meeting to be held in Malta on 27-28 April 2017. The Presidency's intention is to discuss the mid-term review of the renewed Internal Security Strategy, the EU crime priorities for the EU Policy Cycle 2018-2021 and the strengthening of COSI's role.

The Presidency also mentioned the possible organisation of a joint meeting with the Political and Security Committee (PSC).

3. Common minimum standards for security checks on irregular migrants

COSI discussed the Presidency's initiative to elaborate common minimum standards for security checks on irregular migrants as set out in 6717/17. Delegations welcomed the Presidency's initiative and some delegations stated that common rules are already in place for the consultation of the databases in the case of border controls. Various delegations referred to their national practices and stressed the importance of collecting biometrics.

The Presidency invited delegations to send their contributions by 7 April 2017. It would return to this item at the COSI meeting in May with a view to agreeing on possible common minimum standards.

4. Frontex Annual Risk Analysis

COSI took note of the presentation by the Frontex Executive Director of the 2017 Frontex Risk Analysis. Frontex was looking forward to developing further its cooperation with COSI as the agency is increasingly engaged in fighting different types of cross-border crime, including drugs, the smuggling of stolen vehicles and excise goods, arms trafficking and the issue of returning foreign terrorist fighters.

The Commission welcomed the Frontex risk analysis and pointed out that the Frontex Regulation and mandate are clear on Frontex's role and support in fighting cross-border crime.

COSI

5. Draft implementation paper for the renewed Internal Security Strategy (ISS) 2015-2020¹

The Committee endorsed the implementation paper for the renewed ISS as set out in 5645/2/17 REV 2 + COR 1.

The Presidency informed delegations that discussions on the mid-term review of the renewed ISS would take place at the informal COSI meeting in Malta on 27-28 April 2017.

¹ Exceptionally in the presence of the Schengen Associated States.

6. State of play of the High Level Expert Group on Information Systems and Interoperability (HLEG)²

The Committee took note of a brief presentation by the Commission about the main findings in the interim report by the Chair of the HLEG, relating to data quality, the European search portal, the shared biometric matching service and the common identity repository and the need to take data protection issues into account. These findings would also be reflected in the final HLEG report. The Presidency noted that presentation of the final report before the end of April would facilitate the timely preparation for the June JHA Council.

7. EU Policy Cycle:

a) Draft Council conclusions on the continuation of the EU Policy Cycle for organised and serious international crime for the period 2018-2021

COSI noted that there was broad consensus on the draft Council conclusions on the continuation of the EU 2018-2021 Policy Cycle as set out in 6958/17, which would be submitted as an I/A item to the Council on 27-28 March 2017.

The Presidency drew the delegations' attention to some of the main changes in this new Policy Cycle, which are designed to make the Policy Cycle more effective, efficient, streamlined and lighter compared with the previous 2014-2017 Policy Cycle.

b) EU SOCTA 2017

COSI took note of the EU SOCTA 2017 as presented by Europol and had a first exchange of views on the recommended priorities (five specific and three cross-cutting) on the basis of 6886/17 + ADD 1 EU RESTRICTED + ADD 2 EU RESTRICTED. Overall, delegations stated that the SOCTA was a very good and solid basis for discussions on the new priorities to be identified by the Council towards the end of the MT Presidency.

² Exceptionally in the presence of the Schengen Associated States.

The Presidency highlighted the considerable commitment that the Policy Cycle requires in terms of financial and human resources for the Member States and the EU institutions and agencies concerned. The Presidency stated that enlarging the scope and/or overall number of priorities could make the experts' work extremely difficult.

The Commission stated that it would present its views on the EU Policy Cycle crime priorities in the next Commission Progress Report towards an effective and genuine Security Union, which is expected in April 2017.

Several delegations took the floor and suggested the addition of firearms, excise and/or VAT fraud as well as environmental crime to the list of EU crime priorities.

Europol's representatives stated that firearms was already a priority as it was a key part of the SOCTA recommended priority 'online trade in illicit goods'. They suggested limiting the number of EU crime priorities as much as possible and not to divert focus from evidence-based priorities.

The Presidency concluded that the Committee had taken note of the EU SOCTA 2017 and stated that the discussions on the EU crime priorities would continue in the COSI Support Group in the coming weeks on the basis of the Policy Advisory Document (PAD). The Presidency and the Commission would develop a draft PAD on the basis of the EU SOCTA and take into consideration other strategic papers, assessments and policies.

c) Draft Joint Action Days: presentation by Europol and discussion

The Committee validated the concept of the Joint Action Days 2017 as presented by Europol on the basis of 6373/1/17 REV 1 (RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED). The German delegation voiced concerns on the higher number of action days compared to 2016.

8. Member States' approaches to dealing with accompanying family members of foreign terrorist fighter returnees, in particular children: results of the questionnaire and follow-up

The Committee took note of and discussed the EU Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) discussion paper set out in 6900/17 + ADD 1. The work on child returnees, which several delegations considered to be very important, would continue in the relevant working parties and in the network of prevent coordinators. This work would contribute to the content of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) handbook on good practice on how to manage returnees, including children, planned for June 2017.

9. Comprehensive assessment of EU security policy

Several Member States questioned the content and the deadline set out in the comprehensive assessment (CM 1575-17 + COR 1) in the discussions in the COSI Support Group. Following these discussions, the Commission stated that Member States, in their replies to the questionnaire, should focus on strategic issues - in particular future priorities - rather than on technical issues. In that perspective encouraged Member States to reply especially to questions 11 to 13. In the event that Member States had difficulties in meeting the deadline, the Commission explained that it was willing to consider contributions received within two weeks of the deadline. A workshop on counter-terrorism (CT) will be held on 10 April 2017 (organised by EU CTC). A workshop on EU Security Policy related to serious and organised crime will be held on 19 April 2017 at the Europol headquarters.

Delegations welcomed the Commission's clarifications although a number of delegations remained critical as regards the issue of a large scale assessment.

10. The Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy and its internal dimension

The Committee took note of a presentation by the Special Adviser to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy and its internal dimension. She emphasised the point that the Strategy was global in different ways and highlighted some examples of the links between internal and external security (migration, CT, EU Policy Cycle, strategic communications). A key element of the Global Strategy was resilience: resilience of countries outside the EU ultimately affects the resilience of Member States.

The Committee invited the European External Action Service (EEAS) to work closely with all those involved to speed up the measures listed in the Malta Declaration implementation plan and to enhance the coordination between internal and external tools in the fight against serious and organised crime. COSI would return to the issue of the links between internal and external security in May 2017.

11. Any other business

The Committee took note of information provided by the Czech Republic on the recent creation of a Centre 'Against Terrorism and Hybrid Threats', which was set up on 1 January 2017 within the Czech Ministry of the Interior.

The Committee took note of information provided by Austria on the outcome of the conference 'Managing Migration Challenges Together' in Vienna on 8 February 2017 (6277/17).

The Committee took note of information provided by the Slovenian delegation on the follow-up to the Council conclusions on strengthening the EU internal security's external dimension in the Western Balkans including via the Integrative Internal Security Governance (IISG).