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



ANNEX

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THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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ADDENDUM TO THE NOTE

from : The Council General Secretariat
to : Working Party on Terrorism

Subject : Second Round of Peer Evaluation
Preparedness and consequence management in the event of a terrorist attack

Delegations will find enclosed the report of the evaluation mission in **the Netherlands** (26-28 November 2008) in the framework of the above-mentioned round of peer evaluation.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In the framework of the second round of peer evaluation covering "Preparedness and consequence management in case of a terrorist attack" an evaluation visit was made to The Netherlands from 26 to 28 November 2008.
- The threat of terrorism in the Netherlands continues to be real because of both international and national events. The participation of Netherlands forces in international missions and events such as the release of the movie "Fitna", mean that the Dutch authorities are constantly aware that The Netherlands is still on the list of potential targets in Europe.
- However even if the release of Fitna has led to repeated calls for violence at national level and for a boycott of Dutch products, reactions have been moderate. The national Islamic community and the main local Imams called for a moderate and peaceful reaction and all the protests that took place were non-violent. Several Christian organisations have joined the protests against Fitna, which has brought the two religious communities closer together. International protests and even cyber attacks occurred, but international efforts by the Dutch government to distance itself from the film have proved effective.
- Significant efforts to fight radicalisation and polarisation, in the real world and in the virtual one, are ongoing. Social studies have demonstrated that a significant percentage of Dutch Muslims, especially young Muslims find it hard to see a future in the Netherlands.
- The evaluation mission to the Netherlands took place between 26 and 28 November 2008.
- The expert team was composed of representatives from the Council, the Commission, Europol, Greece and Estonia.
- The main contact point in the country was the NTCb, which is the structure responsible for the coordination, at national level, of all the entities involved in the fight against terrorism. It was also the NTCb that organised the agenda and the programme of the visit.

- The Mission took place in two different locations, The Hague and Rotterdam. In The Hague (26 and 28 November 2008) meetings were organised with the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and with the National Coordinator for Counter Terrorism office. In Rotterdam (27 November 2008) with the Director General of the Security region, the local police force, the municipality of Rotterdam and the harbour authorities.
- The organisation and logistics were carefully planned by the authorities involved.
- The Netherlands is a country divided into 25 regions. Those regions have strong autonomous administrative and security systems. A representative example is the existence of 25 police forces.
- The Dutch security structure is based on a “bottom-up” system, that is mainly supported by the 25 security regions. All the events are originally taken care of by the structures and authorities of the security region. An escalation system divided in 4 levels (called GRIP), corresponding to the gravity of the event, allows the involvement of the needed institutions dealing with crisis and consequence management in the region. The participation of the national authorities, which are aware and informed about the crisis events, takes place only when different regions are involved and when international contacts and coordination are necessary.
- The model operates in an efficient way, focused mainly on solving the crisis situation with minimum delay and disturbance and maximum efficiency.
- The visited region of Rotterdam has a centralised emergency services centre, that allows to have in the same room, police, fire department and medical emergency. These facilities, called ROC, and general dispatch room, are used during crisis situations as well as on a daily basis for any emergency situation that occurs.
It may be noted that in the same building the harbour authorities have their coordination centre, which manages all issues relating to the harbour 24 hours a day, and has direct contact with the other authorities mentioned.

- Heavy investment has been made in the area of prevention, security and management of crisis situations, a fact well demonstrated by top-of-the-technology facilities purchased at regional and national level. The Rotterdam area that was visited has a special status because of its economic importance; other security areas are not so well prepared and developed.
- The training exercises concerning crisis and consequence management are dealt with by the regional authorities, although national exercises take place roughly once a year. The results of such regional exercises should be shared with the regions not directly involved. The NTCb could play an important role in this sharing task as a contact and coordination body for the results. The regions could also invite representatives of other areas as observers, creating a stronger national network.
- Cross-border and international coordination should be reinforced. The development of a common approach, i.e. with neighbouring countries, to the issue of cross-border targets is of extreme importance.
- Common exercises should be developed, with joint efforts on the development of scenarios and the resolution of the situation. Common approaches should become routine.
- The main recommendations resulting from this evaluation mission focus on the following areas:
 1. Cooperation and coordination between different regions should be developed and reinforced .
 2. Cooperation between harbour authorities in the field of security
 3. Cooperation with neighbouring countries could be further enhanced

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2. ARRANGEMENTS IN THE EVENT OF A TERRORIST ATTACK

2.1. Structures and organisational framework of National Crisis Centres

The Dutch security structure is based on a “bottom-up” system, that is mainly supported by the 25 security regions. All the events are originally taken care of by the structures and authorities of the security region. An escalation system divided in 4 levels (called GRIP), corresponding to the gravity of the event, allows the involvement of the needed institutions dealing with crisis and consequence management in the region. The participation of the national authorities, which are aware and informed about the crisis events, takes place only when different regions are involved and when international contacts and coordination are necessary.

2.1.1. Structures at national level

The National Crisis Centre (NCC) in terms of organisation and management falls under the Ministry of the Interior and the (inter)national contact point for all crises on the basis of which Ministries can cooperate before or during large-scale crises. The aim of such cooperation is to analyse, set joint priorities and take fundamental decisions during crises which affects more sectors or the entire country.

Every ministry has its own Departmental Coordination Centre and will deal with the crisis in its own policy field. The National Crisis Centre (NCC) is the permanent centre for the exchange of information for these ministries.

In the case of a terrorist attack or suspicion thereof, the National Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism (NCTb), who comes under the responsibility of the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Justice, will take the lead. After the Madrid attacks in March 2004, the Dutch authorities evaluated their structures in place and concluded that the coordination of about 20 parties involved in countering terrorism needed to be improved. The NCTb was set up and started officially operating at the beginning of 2005. The office of the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator is a relatively small one, with only about 90 members of staff. This was intentional, as it allows the organisation to focus on its core task

The core tasks of the NCTb are:

- Collection and analysis of information
- Drafting a quarterly Threat Assessment (DTN)
- Policy and communication strategy
- Co-ordination of all parties involved in preventing terrorism
- Co-ordination of terrorist crisis
- Maintenance of the Counterterrorism Alert System (ATb) as well as the National Surveillance and Protection System
- Monitoring Civil Aviation Security

Five different scenarios have been developed by the NCTb in cooperation with executive and operational services in order to respond to terrorist attacks. Three of these scenarios cover possible terrorist events in the Netherlands, such as a terrorist attack against individuals, a major attack or an attack using CBRN material. The other two scenarios explore the consequences of a terrorist attack or incident abroad with ramifications for the Western world, whether or not combined with a concrete threat against the Netherlands. Possible measures and their effects have been listed for each of the scenarios. The purpose of the summary was to establish a Grid Map of Possible Measures (Staalkaart van mogelijke overheidsmaatregelen bij een dreigende terroristische aanslag).

A fairly unique topic in decision-taking is the fact that the MOJ can overrule other ministers, e.g. in the case of a renegade aeroplane, the MOJ can overrule the Minister of Defence in the event that he does not wish to act.

The Minister of Justice is the coordinating minister in the event of a terrorist attack and has the power to decide on various specific measures to be taken. In special circumstances, the Prime Minister, exercising his decision-making prerogative, will chair the Ministerial Policy Team, which will meet at the NCC in the case of a (inter)national crisis.

Where several Ministries are responsible for a crisis, all the administrators involved will gather at the NCC where they will have joint consultations. The NCC will bring together all sectors and will facilitate the interministerial meetings providing, among other things, all the logistical support required.

The NCC facilities, located at the Ministry of the Interior, have been recently renewed as part of an ongoing effort in the Netherlands to increase its capacity and readiness to counter terrorist activities.

Concerning the legal basis for the existence of the NCC: after the disaster in Chernobyl, Dutch parliament decided to create this structure in order to coordinate national crises. There is no specific legal framework as such; however, since 1997 a National Handbook on decision-making processes in crises, endorsed by the National Council of Ministers, has provided the general framework for the national structures for decision-making in all crises. Other non-specific documents also can be referred to as a source for the NCC's legal basis: the Municipalities Act, the Province Act, the Police Act, the Fire Service Act and in 2009 the Safety Regions Act.

The main national authorities and structures involved in the National Crisis Centre (NCC) are:

From the Ministries:

Ministries are responsible for dealing with their respective sectorial crises. Where more sectors are involved in a crisis, the NCC will be informed and at the request of one of the ministries an interdepartmental meeting will be organised in order to exchange information or to take comprehensive decisions. As mentioned before, the Minister of the Interior is generally responsible for crisis management, with the exception of crises resulting from terrorist attacks or a threat thereof, in which case the Minister of Justice leads.

In the event of a terrorist crisis, the National Coordinator for Counter Terrorism (NCTb) is in charge of coordinating crisis management at national level.

The National Operational Centre (LOCC), which forms part of the Ministry of the Interior, supports the regions and the National Crisis Centre in all (multidisciplinary) operational aspects in case of imminent or immediate crises, disasters, large-scale incidents and events. The LOCC takes part in the interdepartmental decision-making meeting. Briefly, it may be said that the LOCC supports the regions and the National Authorities in all operational aspect in the case of imminent or immediate crises, disaster or large-scale incidents, whether national or international.

The Expertise Centre for Risk and Crisis Communication (ERC), set up in May 2005, also forms part of the Ministry of the Interior, advising and assisting all ministries and local authorities on matters of risk and crisis communication. The ERC is also in charge of gathering and sharing information on risk and crisis communication, policy-making and the provision of advice on risk and crisis communication, as well as the provision of advice and support during any crisis. Informing the public in a careful and appropriate manner during a crisis is a very important task for the government.

The National Training Co-ordination Centre (SSCb) is in charge of training coordination and conducts training at government level.

In September 2008, the Expertise Centre Risk and Crisis Communication (ERC) and the National Training Co-ordination Centre (SSCb) were integrated into the NCC.

The National Operation Centre (NOC – Dutch abbreviation LOCC" is not a part of the NCC; there is a close cooperation and there are liaisons on a daily bases.

Police forces:

Police forces have a tactical or operational task during a crisis. The national police.

Intelligence services:

Information coming from the Dutch civil and military security service and the police force is gathered by the office of the National Coordinator for Counter Terrorism for threat assessments and for providing up-to-date information.

It is also important to note the existence of the DTN, a broad-based analysis of the national and international threat to the Netherlands and Dutch interests abroad for policymakers. The document is addressed to the Cabinet Committee on National Security ("Secret" version), local and provincial authorities, government agencies, etc. ("Restricted" version); there is an unclassified version for the Parliament and the public.

There are four different threat levels in place:

Minimal

Limited

Substantial

Critical

The threat level for the Netherlands was raised from “Limited” to “Substantial” in March 2008.

This was prompted by the growing threat to Europe as a whole, combined with the Netherlands’ high international profile. Jihadists regarded the film “Fitna” as deeply offensive and a provocation. Its release and the military presence in Afghanistan, as well as statements by the “core of al-Qaeda”, had an impact on the threat level in the Netherlands. From an international perspective, the main threat arises from Pakistan/Afghanistan as well as from North African networks which also have an influence on transnational networks in Europe. Local jihadist networks are present but relatively calm. An increasing level of resistance against violence has been identified in the national Islamic community.

Based on the quarterly DTN, each region sets up its own more detailed threat assessment geared to the particular region.

The ATb is a precautionary alert system connected to 14 economic sectors, particularly those related to critical infrastructure of vital financial/economic importance, the large number of possible casualties, and symbolic value/importance. Four alert levels (“standard” - “low” – “moderate” – “high”) correspond to the associated security measures. The idea is to offer a structured response to terrorist threats by the respective sectors, while the Government provides the DTN and the co-ordination of decision-making and operational requirements.

The separation of DTN and ATb allows a tailor-made Public Private Partnership. The procedure for the alerting process is standardised.

The Surveillance and Protection System determines the degree of the threat to an individual service or object. It serves as the basis for specific security measures taken by the government.

2.1.2. Structures at Regional level

At a regional level the existence of 25 police regions creates the need for special, concrete arrangements according to the specific nature of each of the areas. Of particular interest is the way in which the authorities work together within so-called “security regions” which bring together all relevant authorities at the local and regional level. An elaborate system of ensuring that any crisis is dealt with at the right level has been established by every region as well.

Rotterdam being the largest port and industrial area in Europe, crisis and consequence management is a crucial issue for the Safety Region Rotterdam Rijnmond. Besides the four partners in the integrated system, composed of Police, Fire Service, Medical Disaster Management and Emergency Management Service, the Port Security authorities play a key role in this system.

A Coordinated Regional Incident control Procedure (GRIP, Gecoördineerde Regionale Incidentenbestrijdings-Procedure) has been developed. This procedure escalates from GRIP 1 to GRIP 4.

GRIP 1 can be activated by the Officer in Charge from the Police, Fire Brigade, Medical Disaster Management and Emergency Management Service. Special trained staff takeover the command of the scene and decide whether or not GRIP 2 is to be activated. As soon as GRIP 2 is activated, the Regional Operational Centre (ROC) takes up its activities. The ROC is chaired by a specially trained multi-operational leader and all the necessary public partners are called together. The ROC is responsible for logistical support, information network, Government advice, warnings and alerts for citizens, and distribution of information to the citizens and the media. GRIP 3 is the Safety Board, chaired by the mayor and composed by the heads of services. GRIP 4 is only activated if at least two Safety Boards are involved and provides a range of additional administrative possibilities.

The most obvious result of this approach is a strategy and practice which appear to be remarkably well joined up. For example, the alerting functions for police, fire brigade and ambulance for the whole region are located in the same room, making a quick and measured response to incidents much easier. These services also co-operate closely with the harbour master's office in Rotterdam, which has a number of important responsibilities for maintaining safety and security in the harbour and its direct vicinity.

In a general sense, detailed procedures and plans are in place for the whole region on how to respond to crises, including decision-making, responsibilities of different actors, up-scaling, etc. Demonstrations were also made of mobile decontamination equipment to deal with CBRN incidents, with the involvement of the fire and ambulance services, as well as a demonstration of the highly specialised equipment which has been developed by the Rotterdam fire brigade – together with the fire services of private companies working in the harbour – to extinguish large-scale chemical fires. During the CBNR exercise it was possible to see how frequent training allows a more efficient management of the consequences. It was particularly interesting to observe the process of triage of victims, in particular in the case of victims of a CBRN attack. The well-defined set-up phase, and a fire department and medical personnel who are properly equipped and know how to use the protective equipment, means that the number of fatalities from this kind of crisis can be minimised.

In the more direct fight against conventional terrorism, a special intervention team demonstrated how a captured boat could be recaptured in Rotterdam harbour. All these exercises are held frequently.

3. TRAINING/EXERCISES FOR TESTING THE NATIONAL CRISIS CENTRE AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS IN THE EVENT OF A TERRORIST ATTACK

Horizontal and vertical communication channels are in place and standardised.

The communication system used in crisis situations is “CEDRIC”. It enables different players (e.g. fire brigade, health services, police) involved in managing the crisis to communicate within one system and to monitor the communication of the other services.

CEDRIC has already been deployed in some Safety Regions and coverage of the whole country is expected soon. Besides its functions as a communication system, CEDRIC covers information on the incident, situation reports, action taken, and a logbook, as well as a map of the region.

It provides search functions (like Google), information on soft targets and critical infrastructure as well as sketch maps of relevant enterprises.

The “GRIP system” applies to all Safety Regions. The activation of GRIP 2 is reported to the NCC. Depending on the scale and hence the impact of the incident, an intensive bottom-to-top flow of information is established.

An exercise cycle has been set up within the ATb. Starting with a workshop for each sector, one tabletop exercise and one operational exercise with the involvement of Special Forces is conducted every five years.

Integrated training of the fire brigades is carried out in order to save evidence at the crime scene.

In 2006, the Netherlands participated in an international ICT exercise.

The latest exercise (topic: flooding) on crisis management took place at the beginning of November 2008 and tested, inter alia, the operational control of the NOC.

Exercises for ministers are conducted twice per year. The ministers are notified about upcoming exercises beforehand.

Other than that, the technical and organisational facilities presented appeared to be state of the art, the procedures and plans well thought through and practised regularly, and the people involved well aware of the latest developments in crisis management and well trained and prepared.

4. SOFT TARGETS

Cooperation with private entities/protection of critical infrastructure

Since 2001, there is a national programme for the protection of critical infrastructure, which is organised through public-private partnership. The programme has an all-hazards approach. Protection against security threats (man-made threats, including terrorism) is an important element in the programme. The programme has led to several instruments for involving the private sector in the prevention and management of terrorist attacks.

Information regarding security threats is shared with the managers responsible for critical infrastructure through NAVI, the National Advisory Centre for Critical Infrastructure. This enables sectors which form part of the critical infrastructure to take structural measures to increase their level of protection. During the threat of a terrorist attack, critical infrastructure will be informed through the Counterterrorism Alert System (ATb) (see 3.1).

With regard to the security of soft targets, the ATb has been established on a national level, focusing on cooperation with the relevant umbrella organisations. The community and mayor level directly negotiates with potential individual targets, thereby establishing close contacts at different levels.

5. GOOD PRACTICES

- The existence of a Counter Terrorism Coordinator who takes the coordination role in the case of a terrorist event. Both in terms of technical expertise and in terms of updated procedures it is clear that preparedness for and capability to respond to crises, in particular terrorist ones, have increased considerably as a consequence.
- The advanced approach with regard to Public Private Partnership certainly appears to be a good practice. The separation of national (political) threat levels as outlined in the DTN from the private sector's alerts system is an asset for valuable cooperation between the two parties.
- The set-up of five scenarios and their respective checklists provides the commander on the scene and in the command centres with sufficient guidelines but also enough flexibility to respond adequately to any emergency situation.
- The University of Leiden has set up a Chair on Terrorism. As such, the university provides input to the DTN. The existence of this discipline in the university allows not only a historical overview of the events that have defined all the security policies of the present but also a comprehensive approach to the problem of terrorism.
- A very specific feature of the Dutch system that has been set up is its strong reliance on a regional approach, although it became clear that, where a crisis is caused by a terrorist incident, responsibility for managing it will be with the National Counter-Terrorism Coordinator. This structure seems to fit well with the overall Dutch administrative and government culture. It does present some challenges in terms of ensuring a coordinated approach when an attack has cross-regional, national or international ramifications, but these challenges are addressed to some extent by way of exercises involving more than one region, and by way of the coordinating role of the CTC, who is responsible whenever a crisis is of a terrorist nature.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cooperation and coordination between different regions should be developed and reinforced .

The reinforcement of cooperation and coordination between different regions is decisive in case of a cross regional crisis situation. In a country with a relatively small surface it is essential to coordinate and develop the joint efforts of different areas. A region like Rotterdam, for example, should, through the coordination of the National Crisis Centre, organise traineeship and experience sharing with smaller and less well-prepared areas. This kind of action not only reinforces a common knowledge of the procedures, but also allows all the parts involved to become aware of each other in a closer and more operational way.

2. Cooperation between harbour authorities in the field of security

Although the competition between harbours in Europe is well known, an exchange among harbour authorities on the security measures installed and the findings of regularly conducted exercises would certainly be of added value. A periodic round table could be a first step in this direction. The Netherlands could assume a guiding role in this matter.

3. Cooperation with neighbouring countries could be further enhanced

The co-operation on exchange of information in case of crisis with neighbouring countries could be further enhanced by common cross-border exercises, e.g. cross-border rail connections. The reinforcement of this cooperation with border countries through these common exercises developed by a joint task force would enable an improvement to be made to the coordination mechanisms between the different countries involved. This would also solve the problem of deciding, during an emergency, who is the contact point for what in the neighbouring country.

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7. ANNEX

7.1. Presentations were made by the following institutions

- Ministry of Interior and Kingdom
- National Coordinator Counter Terrorism NTCb
- National Crisis Centre
- National Operations Coordination Centre
- Rotterdam Security zone
- National Police
- Rotterdam Security Region

7.2. Speakers

From the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom

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From the National Coordinator Counter terrorism NTCb

NOT DECLASSIFIED

From the Rotterdam Security region

NOT DECLASSIFIED

7.3. Expert Team

Council General Secretariat

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Police and Customs Cooperation Unit - DG Justice and Home Affairs

European Commission

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Directorate General, Justice, Freedom and Security

Europol

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Serious Crime Department – Counter Terrorism

Grecce

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Security Police

Estonia

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Rescue and Crisis Management Policy Department