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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
No. prev. doc.:	11908/16
Subject:	Draft Council Resolution concerning the costs of hosting and deploying visiting police delegations in connection with football matches (and other sports events) with an international dimension, in which at least one Member State is involved

Delegations will find in annex the draft Council Resolution concerning the costs of hosting and deploying visiting police delegations in connection with football matches (and other sports events) with an international dimension, which was agreed by the Law Enforcement Working Party at its meeting on 29 September 2016.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

of

concerning the costs of hosting and deploying visiting police delegations in connection with football matches (and other sports events) with an international dimension, in which at least one Member State is involved

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

- (1) Taking into account that Council Resolution 2010/C 165/01 of 3 June 2010¹ concerning an updated handbook with recommendations for international police cooperation and measures to prevent and control violence and disturbances in connection with football matches with an international dimension, in which at least one Member State is involved.
- (2) Taking into account that the 2010 Resolution contains established good practices on international police cooperation, notably concerning the importance of, and practical arrangements for, hosting and deploying visiting police delegations.
- (3) Taking into account recent experiences in respect of the European Championships in 2012 and 2016, the World Cup in 2014, and the hundreds of European national and club matches held annually across Europe.

¹ OJ C 165, 24.06.2010, p. 1.

- (4) Taking into account the millions of football supporters who annually travel in Europe to support their national or club teams, and that UEFA data confirms that public order and other incidents of varying character occur inside and outside stadiums in connection with around half of these matches. At present, UEFA club competitions alone involve 680 Champions League and Europa League matches played across Europe each year which, coupled with the annual calendar of UEFA European Championship or FIFA World Cup qualifying matches and international friendly matches, involves millions of football supporters travelling across the continent annually.
- (5) Taking into account that football-related violence continues to pose a threat to the safety and security of fellow football supporters and the wider community, and the severity of many incidents is reduced as a result of the presence of visiting police delegations, and that the number and seriousness of these incidents would increase dramatically in the event of any reduction in levels of international police cooperation.
- (6) Taking into account that in many cases, the severity of these incidents is reduced by effective international police cooperation, and that the importance of this cooperation is considered to be of the utmost importance by police match commanders in terms of minimising the safety and security risks to millions of European citizens who attend matches or reside in the cities and towns hosting football events.
- (7) Taking into account the development of established good practice in the framework of international and club matches and tournaments, and the views of over 400 police practitioners (match commanders, National Football Information Point personnel and other football policing specialists) from 27 European countries².
- (8) Taking into account the negative impact which current economic trends and pressures, compounded by the threat of terrorist incidents, is having on police resources,

² Undertaken as part of the Pan-European Football Policing Training Project between 2011 and 2014 and subsequently under the auspices of CEPOL.

HEREBY,

WELCOMES

- the study undertaken by the European Think Tank of Football Safety and Security Experts on the basis of a survey of National Football Information Points in Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden and the UK, seeking detailed information on the average costs currently incurred in connection with the deployment of visiting police delegations under the provisions set out in Council Resolution 2010/C 165/01.

TAKES NOTE

- of the outcome of a study on the average costs incurred when hosting and deploying visiting police delegations in connection with football matches with an international dimension;
- of the emphasis placed on the importance of international police cooperation as a means of preventing and countering football-related violence and other misbehaviour in connection with international and club football matches involving one or more Member States in a series of measures adopted by the Council over the past two decades;

ACKNOWLEDGES

- the vital role of visiting police delegations in terms of providing:
 - host police commanders with expert advice on the character and behaviour of visiting supporters and any associated risks;
 - key information crucial to ensuring an informed and appropriate dynamic risk assessment process;
 - assistance in the efficient management/deployment of police resources in accordance with risk assessment and police budget considerations;

- personnel with the ability and experience in communicating effectively with visiting supporters and reducing any associated emerging risks; and,
 - in the event of any incidents, personnel able to identify visiting offenders;
- the added value which police delegations provide to the host policing operation;
 - the benefit to the visiting police and other authorities in terms of gathering evidence of any violence or other offending behaviour committed by visiting fans for use, in accordance with the national law of the visiting State, to deter such behaviour, prevent repeat offending, and rehabilitate the persons concerned;
 - the value of hosting and deploying visiting police delegations, as recognised by the authorities organising major sports events, in particular football tournaments and matches, and by around 450 front-line football policing practitioners who have participated in eight PE-FFTP (Pan-European Policing Football Training Project) events delivered as part of an EU-funded project and, in respect of the last three events, under the auspices of CEPOL;
 - an increasing tendency on the part of some police and other authorities to decline to send or to host police delegations as a means of making budgetary savings in a challenging financial climate;
 - the impact of this tendency on levels of European football violence and misbehaviour and on the effectiveness of international police cooperation and of the widespread concern which this trend has generated among both European policy makers and front-line policing practitioners.

NOTES

- that the study confirmed that police forces across Europe share the view that visiting police delegations are highly valuable and contribute extensively to policing football operations;
- that, whilst the actual cost incurred by deploying and hosting a visiting police delegation varies according to the size, duration and distance involved in each deployment, the costs incurred are low when compared with the benefits gained by host police commanders;

- that these benefits include expert advice in: determining a risk-assessment based deployment of police forces; understanding the culture and behaviour of visiting supporters; undertaking an informed dynamic risk assessment of any potential risks; and ensuring more effective communication with visiting supporters;
- that the study revealed that the average size and duration of a visiting police delegation was two police officers ("spotters") deployed for two days, which involved one overnight stay in the host country;
- that the average cost incurred in hosting a visiting delegation was reported to be **EUR 282 per delegation**, covering accommodation and internal travel costs;
- that the average cost incurred in deploying a police delegation was reported to be **EUR 850 per delegation**, covering international travel costs and officer expenses;
- that, therefore, the average policing cost for hosting and deploying a visiting police delegation for the home and away legs of, say, a UEFA Champions League or Europa League match, is around EUR 1,100 for each police authority;
- that based on the average costs involved in hosting and deploying visiting police delegations, and notwithstanding any variations in terms of distance travelled, size of delegation or duration of stay, the study reveals that the costs involved represent a modest investment compared with the scale of European policing budgets generally and the operational benefits to be derived from deploying and hosting police delegations;
- that, moreover, European experience demonstrates that deploying and hosting visiting police delegations can also be of benefit in terms of potential resource savings concerning football-related crowd management/public order operations, given the cost that would be incurred as a result of deploying additional host police resources to compensate for the absence of authoritative information on the number of visiting supporters and their behaviour, and the lack of expert advice and support in preventing the escalation of any emerging risks;

- that in the current financial climate policing costs may not be immune to cuts, and that this has resulted in some policing agencies exploring whether football clubs participating in European competitions should meet the costs of visiting police delegations. Whilst this may be an understandable reaction; it raises important ethical issues, including recognition that:
 - football-related violence and disorder is criminality, and therefore the primary responsibility of governments and the police; and
 - the financial and operational independence of the police must not only be free of the vested and commercial interest of football clubs, but must also be widely perceived as such;
- that the need to ensure maximum levels of international police cooperation is self-evident in terms of ensuring that the host police commanders have access to expert advice and support from visiting police delegations, both in respect of assessing threats and reducing risk levels through effective dialogue strategies with visiting supporters, and otherwise helping to create an inclusive and welcoming environment.

CALLS ON MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE AND WITH DUE REGARD TO THE SUBSIDIARITY AND PROPORTIONALITY PRINCIPLES TO:

- a. continue to work together on the basis of Council Resolution 2010/C 165/01, inter alia by hosting and deploying visiting police delegations on the basis of a dynamic risk assessment;
- b. continue in investing wisely and innovatively in the quality of policing football operations;
- c. keep an adequate level of financing for the hosting and deploying visiting police delegations and also for the European police National Football Information Point (NFIP) network; and
- d. enhance international police cooperation in the field of sport events, with particular focus on those who pose a high risk to public order.