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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Letter from the Commissioners Avramopoulos and King on the follow-up to the German-French proposal for an EU Centre on prevention and deradicalisation.

Delegations will find attached the above-mentioned letter from the Commissioners Avramopoulos and King on the follow-up to the German-French proposal for an EU Centre on prevention and deradicalisation.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Cabinet of Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos
Cabinet of Commissioner Julian King

Brussels,
Ares(2017)

Dear Ambassador,

Dear Marlene,

At the Justice and Home Affairs Council in March this year, Commissioner Avramopoulos informed that the Commission would update Ministers at the June JHA Council on the follow-up to the German-French proposal for an EU Centre on prevention and deradicalisation.

Please find enclosed a letter signed by Commissioners Avramopoulos and King to Ministers setting out the Commission's proposed next steps.

I would be grateful if you could transmit this letter to the Ministers of Interior to inform discussions on 9 June.

Yours faithfully,

Diane Schmitt
Head of Cabinet of Mr. Dimitris Avramopoulos
Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs & Citizenship

James Morrison
Head of Cabinet of Mr. Julian King
Commissioner for the Security Union

H.E. Ms Marlene Bonnici
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU
Rue Archimède 25
1000 Brussels



Brussels, 02.06.2017
Ares(2017)

Dear Minister,

Recent terrorist attacks have highlighted the alarming speed and scale at which some of our citizens are radicalising. Atrocities such as the recent attack in Manchester and those in London, Stockholm, Berlin, Nice, Paris and Brussels, underline the need for even greater action throughout the EU to prevent and counter radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism. This call to enhance efforts and turn commitments into action was renewed by G7 leaders in the Taormina Statement on the Fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

Preventing radicalisation has been and remains at the forefront of the EU's counter terrorism response, as highlighted in the European Agenda on Security. The Commission launched a number of initiatives, including the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) and its Centre of Excellence and, more recently, the network of national prevent policy makers. In addition, the EU Internet Forum, including work done by the EU Internet Referral Unit at Europol, the recently launched Civil Society Empowerment Programme as well as the European Strategic Communications Network all contribute significantly to this work. The achievements under the different initiatives constitute a good basis for further work and bear witness to the Commission's commitment to supporting Member States in their efforts to counter radicalisation.

Confronted with new and unprecedented challenges, we need to draw on our experiences so far and further develop the necessary structures, resources, and expertise to implement effective counter-radicalisation actions. The positive contributions of the RAN and the EU Internet Forum serve as a model for further work.

The German-French ideas for an "EU Centre on prevention and de-radicalisation" and to advance *prevent* efforts, building on and consolidating existing initiatives and involving the broadest possible range of stakeholders, as presented at the JHA Council of 27 March, come at a timely moment. The Commission is convinced that there is a need to further enhance our joint efforts to prevent and counter radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism. In this context, a RAN conference on returning foreign terrorist fighters will take place on June 19, and a Senior Officials Meeting of the EU Internet Forum will take place on June 27.

We stand ready to work together in identifying immediate actions, and to explore options for an improved overall framework for better coordination and cooperation between all relevant stakeholders.

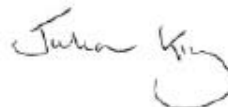
Building upon the good experience from the High-Level Expert Group on Information Systems and Interoperability, the Commission, as a first step, is exploring setting up a High Level Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLEG-R) to allow for a more structured and institutionalised exchange on counter-radicalisation work among the relevant stakeholders. This Expert Group would include representatives from Member States, the RAN Centre of Excellence and researchers as well as expertise from EU institutions and agencies and where appropriate the involvement of the private sector. The Commission decision to establish HLEG-R will be adopted in July, and the first formal group meeting will take place early September, with a mandate limited in time until end of 2018.

The HLEG-R would provide advice and expertise to the Commission with the triple objectives of i) improving cooperation and collaboration among the different stakeholders and bringing EU-level work to counter radicalisation closer to the policy-making level in the Member States, ii) supporting the further development of EU counter-radicalisation policies as currently reflected in the 2016 Communication on the prevention of radicalisation, including by elaborating a set of guiding principles and recommendations and proposing the implementation of concrete prevent actions to address shortcomings and gaps, and iii) helping to assess options for a more permanent structure for collaboration and coordination of counter-radicalisation work at EU level.

We are confident that this will allow us to pursue more effectively, in close cooperation with Member States, our immediate and longer term efforts against the growing threat of radicalisation. We hope to count on your support and continued commitment in this endeavour.



Dimitris AVRAMOPOULOS
*Commissioner for Migration,
Home Affairs and Citizenship*



Sir Julian KING
*Commissioner for the
Security Union*