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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
On:	15 October 2014
To:	Terrorism Working Party and COTER
Subject:	Summary of discussions

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in document CM 4394/14.

2. Information by the Presidency

– Information on TWP work programme during the Italian Presidency

The TWP Chair outlined the issues dealt with by the TWP during this semester which included Multinational ad hoc Teams, lone actors, use of malicious means/methods to carry out acts of terrorism and the CT capabilities of Western Balkan countries. In addition, the Guidelines implementing the recently adopted updated EU Strategy on radicalisation and recruitment have been finalised. He also noted that the programme of the Presidency had been adapted in view of the evolving threat of foreign fighters and the issue has been discussed from different perspectives at a number of occasions.

– **Information on COTER work programme during the Italian Presidency**

The COTER Chair noted that the programme of the Presidency had been adapted in view of the evolving situation in the Middle East. He explained that in his term COTER was dealing notably with the preparation of the CT/foreign fighters strategy to tackle the situation in Syria and Iraq including in regard to its progress to and discussion in PSC. Ways of enhancing the synergy between the internal and external aspects of CT including through TWP and COTER has also been addressed, with the aim of enhancing cooperation and reducing duplication. Furthermore, political dialogues are proposed with GCC, US, Australia and UN and the Group sought to facilitate EU engagement with GCTF.

3. Security situation in North Africa – Focus on Libya

– **Presentation by Moroccan delegation**

A delegation from Morocco made an assessment of the situation in Libya and explained its impact on the security of Morocco and the whole region. Cross-border crime, clandestine immigration and dissemination of weapons all contribute to the lack of security which has to be addressed by the international community. Libya is becoming a frontline for regional and international terrorists and an area for management and coordination of terrorist activities. In view of the escalation of the conflict, which is aggravated by struggles between tribes, there is a risk that the area becomes a safe haven for terrorists from the middle East. Foreign fighters returning from Syria can also use Libya as a key hub. The Moroccan delegation concluded that the EU has a fundamental role to play as a partner in addressing the situation and coordination of different initiatives.

Delegations agreed with the analysis made by the Moroccan delegation and acknowledged Morocco's commitment in fighting terrorism in the region and good cooperation at bilateral and international level. It was agreed that the instability in Libya poses a direct threat to the EU, through terrorism, as well as trafficking of illicit goods, including arms. The international community has to mobilise in addressing the repercussion of instability in Libya.

– **Presentation by IntCen (EU CONFIDENTIAL)**

The meeting took note of a presentation by a representative of IntCen (EU CONFIDENTIAL) on the abovementioned subject.

4. Foreign Fighters

– Presentation by the UN Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director UNCTED on the new UNSCR 2178 focusing on Foreign Fighters

The UN Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director UNCTED outlined the main aspects of the UNSC Resolution 2178 of 24 September, which called on all States to cooperate urgently on preventing the flow of terrorist fighters to and from conflict zones.

The Resolution requires countries to take certain steps to address the threat of foreign fighters, including to prevent suspected individuals from entering or transiting their territories and to implement legislation to prosecute foreign fighters.

The importance of improving international cooperation in this field, such as by sharing information on criminal investigations and prosecutions, was stressed. The speaker also referred to other issues linked to the phenomenon which also have to be addressed such as financing of foreign fighters, border management or dissemination of weapons. He highlighted the excellent cooperation between UNCTED and EEAS and CTC respectively, including through awareness raising projects in Maghreb.

Delegations agreed that the proper implementation of the Resolution should be an important step in combating foreign fighters. It was suggested that the EU should undertake to implement the Resolution collectively and offer support to all states who need assistance in its implementation.

– Presentation by the EEAS on the Syria and Iraq: CT/foreign fighters strategy

The representative of EEAS outlined the main aspects of the Strategy discussed at COTER since July¹ including an update on the discussions in this area at PSC which were being held at the same time as the joint meeting. The Strategy is one element of the EU's wider foreign and security policy towards Iraq and Syria with a view to focus on counter-terrorism and foreign fighters.

5. Initiatives to strengthen the counter terrorism capabilities of Western Balkans countries

The representatives of the Commission and the EEAS informed on the upcoming workshop in Ljubljana (16-17 October) which should help establish the necessary networks for sharing of expertise between the EU and Western Balkans authorities.

¹ 14476/14 EU RESTRICTED

SI delegation outlined the main idea of the initiative² which is to further harmonise national capacities of WB countries notably in the field of prevention of radicalisation and recruitment. The need for a comprehensive approach avoiding overlaps was particularly stressed.

6. Terrorist and extremist material online

The UK delegation gave a presentation on the UK approach to restricting access to terrorist and extremist material online and stressed the importance of cooperation between the governments, law enforcement, industry and civil society in limiting the space in which these groups can operate online. Working with major social media companies is regarded as a priority. In the UK, Counter-terrorism internet referral unit (CTIRU) aims to remove unlawful terrorist material content from the internet, and with the cooperation of the private sector, also material with radicalisation impact.

In the discussion which followed delegations agreed that internet has a central role in radicalising foreign fighters and it is very challenging to find ways at EU level on how to engage with internet. Some Member States agreed with the UK approach, while others were more cautious regarding the removal of online content from the internet and underlined the importance of basing the work on respect for fundamental rights and values in Europe. The COM representative confirmed that under the current circumstances and in conditions where there is no unanimity at EU level, the UK approach cannot be supported by the COM. The work underway should nevertheless be continued and concentrate on areas where there is consensus.

7. Enhancing the links between internal and external aspects of EU counter-terrorism work

In the context of the ongoing work aimed at enhancing links between the internal and external aspects of CT, which was initiated in 2011 through the adoption of Council conclusions³, the Presidency presented doc. 14081/14 which highlights the need for greater synergy between TWP and COTER, notably in view of the ever greater number of overlapping issues such as foreign fighters and certain aspects of CT work in some geographical areas (e.g. Western Balkans or North Africa). In order to have more interactions on topics relevant for both groups and at the same time avoid overlaps, joint discussions and information sharing were suggested among several other measures as practical steps which can help to increase understanding of the issues and at the same time stimulate collaboration within Member States.

² DS 1386/14

³ 11075/11

Delegations were invited to send comments on the paper to the Presidency by 22 October. The TWP Chair suggested further discussing this issue also during the next TWP meeting.

8. Global Counter Terrorism Forum 6th Ministerial Meeting, New York, 23 September 2014

Delegations took note of the information by the EEAS representative regarding the recent meeting of the GCTF.

9. Presentation by the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator

a) Annual report on the implementation of the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy

The CTC introduced the updated report set out in doc. 13971/14 which outlines ongoing activities in the field of combating terrorism in the EU and invited delegations to make any necessary comments and corrections to his office before 7 November 2014.

b) Report on the implementation of the revised Strategy on Terrorist Financing

The CTC presented the report set out in doc. 12243/14 and elaborated on some of its aspects and measures to be taken such as better use of TFTP which plays a vital role in the support of EU and third states counter-terrorism investigations, the need to raise awareness and make effective use of the of the UN sanctions regime, use the listing of EU nationals and engage with countries bordering Syria and Iraq. Particular attention should be given to financing of ISIL.

10. Information on counter-terrorism activities:

– European Commission

The representative of the Commission briefed the meeting about the recent adoption of the report on the implementation of the Framework decision on combating terrorism⁴ and noted that the Commission would study whether amendments to the FD are needed on the basis of the adoption of the UNSCR 2178.

⁴ 13040/14 + ADD 1

– **EEAS**

The EEAS representative referred to a number of upcoming events in the CT area including Conference of regional centres for combating terrorism, political dialogues with Australia, US and GCC and an expert seminar on financing of ISIL.

11. AOB

No issues were raised under AOB.
